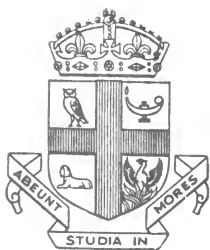


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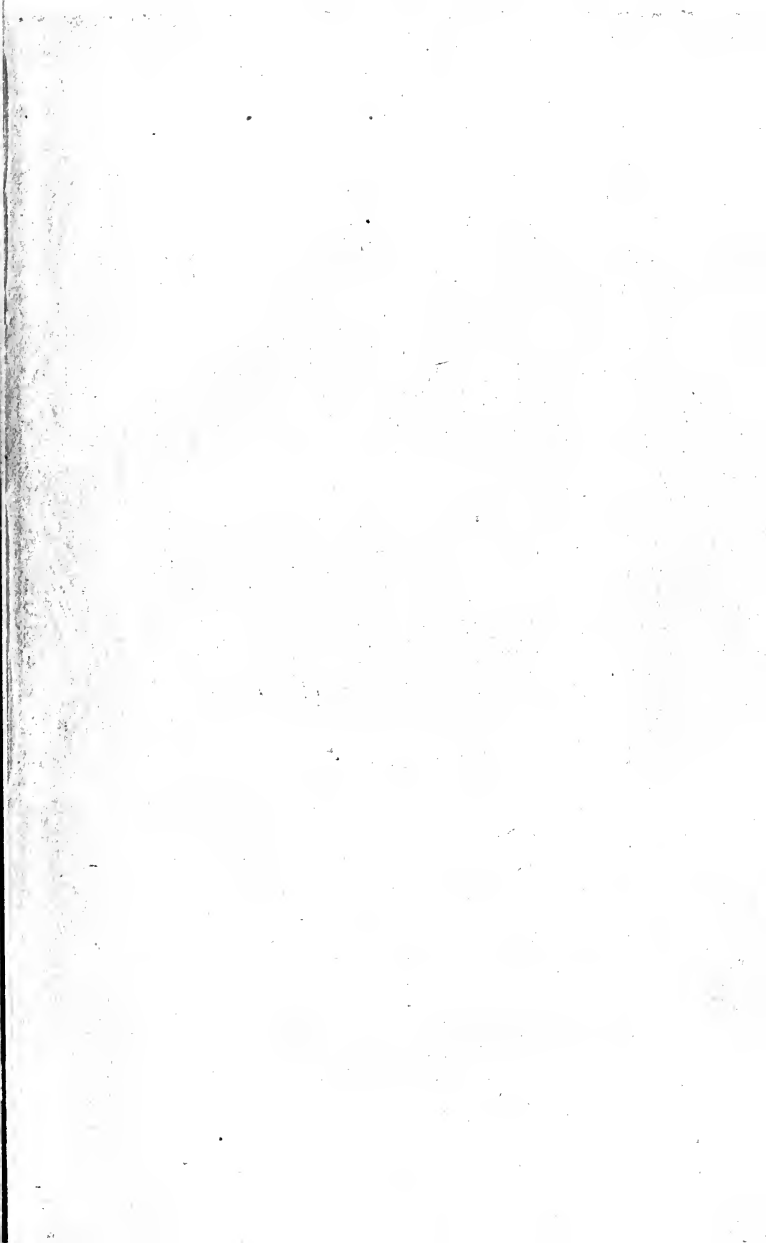
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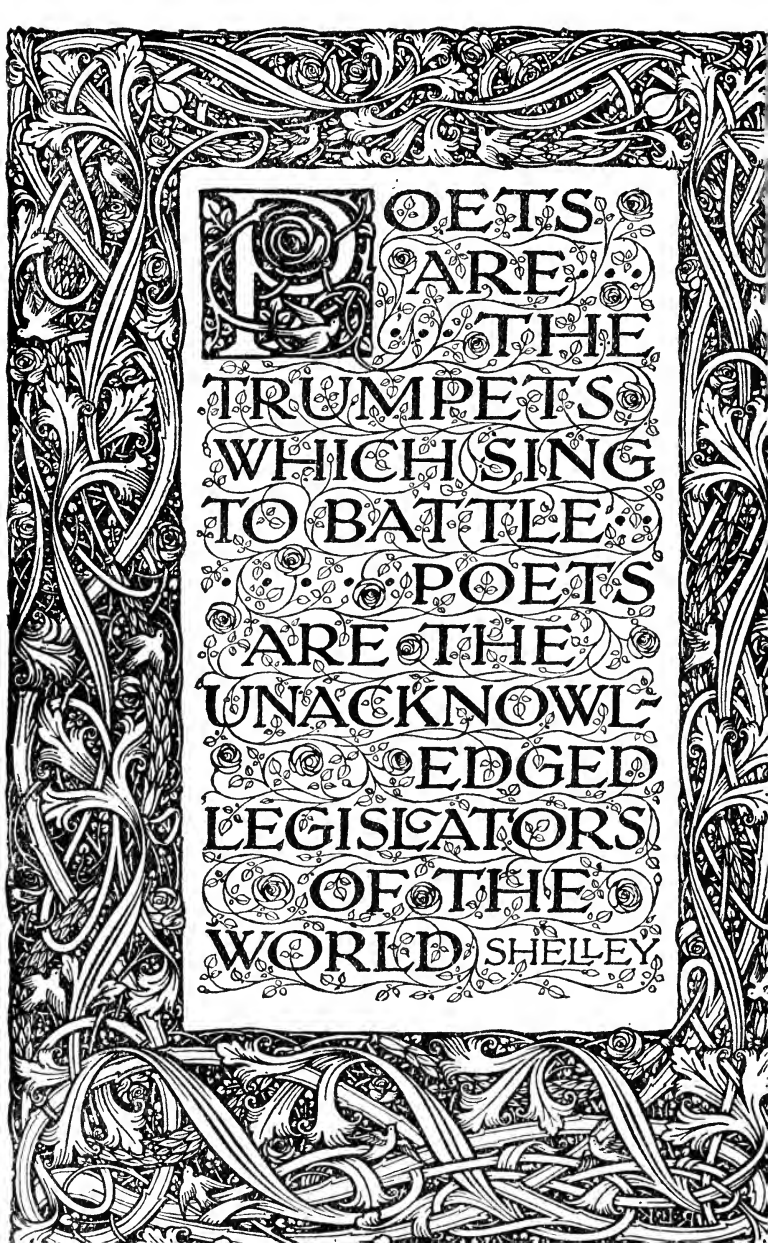
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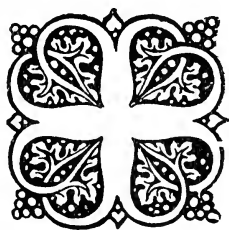
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POETS
ARE
THE
TRUMPETS
WHICH SING
TO BATTLE
POETS
ARE THE
UNACKNOWLEDGED
LEGISLATORS
OF THE
WORLD. SHELLEY

THE POEMS
and PLAYS
OF SIR
WALTER R
SCOTT R
IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II.



LONDON: PUBLISHED
by J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD
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SCOTT'S POEMS

THE LADY OF THE LAKE¹

The Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

CANTO FIRST

THE CHASE

Harp of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud!
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's
matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command

¹ Dedication: To the most noble John James Marquis of Abercorn, this poem is inscribed by the author.

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
 Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
 And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
 Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
 The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
 Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

- I. The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
 Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
 And deep his midnight lair had made
 In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
 But, when the sun his beacon red
 Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
 The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
 Resounded up the rocky way,
 And faint, from farther distance borne,
 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.
- II. As Chief, who hears his warder call,
 "To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
 The antler'd monarch of the waste
 Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
 But, ere his fleet career he took,
 The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
 Like crested leader proud and high,
 Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky;
 A moment gazed adown the dale,
 A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
 A moment listen'd to the cry,
 That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh;
 Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
 With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
 And, stretching forward free and far,
 Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.
- III. Yell'd on the view the opening pack;
 Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them back:
 To many a mingled sound at once
 The awaken'd mountain gave response.
 A hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
 Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
 Their peal the merry horns rung out,
 A hundred voices join'd the shout;
 With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
 No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.¹

¹ Benvoirlich, a mountain comprehended in the cluster of the Grampians, at the head of the valley of the Garry, a river which springs from its base. It rises to an elevation of 3330 feet above the level of the sea.

Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint and more faint, its failing din
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

- iv. Less loud the sounds of silvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly on the mountain side
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

- v. The noble stag was pausing now,
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copsewood grey,
That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
Fresh vigour with the hope return'd,
With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

- vi. 'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more;
What reins were tighten'd in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,—
For twice that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.

Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII. Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toll'd the bloodhounds stanch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII. The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosach's¹ wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild-flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX. Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanish'd game;

¹ "The term *Trosachs* signifies the *rough* or *bristled* territory."—
GRAHAM.

But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
 The gallant horse exhausted fell.
 The impatient rider strove in vain
 To rouse him with the spur and rein,
 For the good steed, his labours o'er,
 Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
 Then, touch'd with pity and remorse,
 He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
 "I little thought, when first thy rein
 I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
 That Highland eagle e'er should feed
 On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
 Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
 That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"

- x. Then through the dell his horn resounds,
 From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
 Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace,
 The sulky leaders of the chase;
 Close to their master's side they press'd,
 With drooping tail and humbled crest;
 But still the dingle's hollow throat
 Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.
 The owlets started from their dream,
 The eagles answer'd with their scream,
 Round and around the sounds were cast,
 Till echo seem'd an answering blast;
 And on the hunter hied his way,
 To join some comrades of the day;
 Yet often paused, so strange the road,
 So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.
- xi. The western waves of ebbing day
 Roll'd o'er the glen their level way;
 Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
 Was bathed in floods of living fire.
 But not a setting beam could glow
 Within the dark ravines below,
 Where twined the path in shadow hid,
 Round many a rocky pyramid,
 Shooting abruptly from the dell
 Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;
 Round many an insulated mass,
 The native bulwarks of the pass,
 Huge as the tower which builders vain
 Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.¹
 The rocky summits, split and rent,
 Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,

¹ The Tower of Babel.—Genesis, xi. 1-9.

Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair;
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

- xii. Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

- xiii. Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim,
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,

Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

xiv. And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down on the lake in masses threw
Crag, knolls and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feather'd o'er
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

xv. From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed.
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,
"For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister grey;
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matins' distant hum,

While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 To drop a bead with every knell—
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
 Should each bewilder'd stranger call
 To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

xvi. "Blithe were it then to wander here!
 But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
 Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
 The copse must give my evening fare;
 Some mossy bank my couch must be,
 Some rustling oak my canopy.
 Yet pass we that; the war and chase
 Give little choice of resting-place;—
 A summer night, in greenwood spent,
 Were but to-morrow's merriment:
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,
 Such as are better miss'd than found;
 To meet with Highland plunderers here,
 Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
 I am alone;—my bugle-strain
 May call some straggler of the train;
 Or, fall the worst that may betide,
 Ere now this falchion has been tried."

xvii. But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When lo! forth starting at the sound,
 From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock,
 A damsel guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow-twigg to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
 The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,
 And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant strain.
 With head up-raised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art,

In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

xviii. And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear!

xix. A Chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betray'd.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unreveal'd,
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
O need I tell that passion's name!

- xx. Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:—
“ Father! ” she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
A while she paused, no answer came,—
“ Malcolm, was thine the blast? ” the name
Less resolutely utter'd fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
“ A stanger I, ” the Huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar,
Push'd her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gain'd between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen;
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.
- xxi. On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly press'd its signet sage
Yet had not quench'd the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb array'd,
And weaponless, except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a Baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trode the shore.
Slighting the petty need he show'd,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.
- xxii. A while the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That Highland halls were open still
To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
“ Nor think you unexpected come

To yon lone isle, our desert home;
 Before the heath had lost the dew,
 This morn, a couch was pull'd for you;
 On yonder mountain's purple head
 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
 And our broad nets have swept the mere
 To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
 "Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
 Your courtesy has err'd," he said;
 "No right have I to claim, misplaced,
 The welcome of expected guest.
 A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
 My way, my friends, my courser lost,
 I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
 Have ever drawn your mountain air,
 Till on this lake's romantic strand.
 I found a fay in fairy land!"—

xxiii. "I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approach'd the side,—
 "I well believe, that ne'er before
 Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore;
 But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
 A grey-hair'd sire, whose eye intent
 Was on the vision'd future bent.
 He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
 Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
 Painted exact your form and mien,
 Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt,
 That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
 That cap with heron plumage trim,
 And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
 He bade that all should ready be,
 To grace a guest of fair degree;
 But light I held his prophecy,
 And deem'd it was my father's horn,
 Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

xxiv. The stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
 A destined errant-knight I come,
 Announced by prophet sooth and old,
 Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
 I'll lightly front each high emprise,
 For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
 Permit me, first, the task to guide
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
 The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,

The toil unwonted saw him try ;
 For seldom sure, if e'er before,
 His noble hand had grasp'd an oar :
 Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
 And o'er the lake the shallop flew ;
 With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
 The hounds behind their passage ply.
 Nor frequent does the bright oar break
 The dark'ning mirror of the lake,
 Until the rocky isle they reach,
 And moor their shallop on the beach.

xxv. The stranger view'd the shore around ;
 'Twas all so close with copsewood bound,
 Nor track nor pathway might declare
 That human foot frequented there,
 Until the mountain-maiden show'd
 A clambering unsuspected road,
 That winded through the tangled screen,
 And open'd on a narrow green,
 Where weeping birch and willow round
 With their long fibres swept the ground.
 Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
 Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

xxvi. It was a lodge of ample size,
 But strange of structure and device ;
 Of such materials, as around
 The workman's hand had readiest found.
 Lopp'd off their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
 And by the hatchet rudely squared,
 To give the walls their destined height,
 The sturdy oak and ash unite ;
 While moss and clay and leaves combined
 To fence each crevice from the wind.
 The lighter pine-tree, over-head,
 Their slender length for rafters spread,
 And wither'd heath and rushes dry
 Supplied a russet canopy.
 Due westward, fronting to the green,
 A rural portico was seen,
 Aloft on native pillars borne.
 Of mountain fir, with bark unshorn,
 Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
 The ivy and Idæan vine,
 The clematis, the favour'd flower
 Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
 And every hardy plant could bear
 Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.

An instant in this porch she staid,
And gaily to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

xxvii. "My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."
He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,
When on the floor he saw displayed,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the silvan hall.

xxviii. The wondering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised:—
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length,
And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle-field."
She sigh'd, then smiled and took the word:
"You see the guardian champion's sword:
As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand;
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart;
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."

xxix. The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unask'd his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names,
"The Knight of Snowdown, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning, with Lord Moray's train,
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

xxx. Fain would the Knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire.
Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks display'd
The simple grace of silvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Show'd she was come of gentle race.
'Twere strange, in ruder rank to find,
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
Each hint the Knight of Snowdown gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turn'd all inquiry light away:—
"Weird women we! by dale and down
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Fill'd up the symphony between.

SONG

xxxI. "Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more:
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the day-break from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping."

xxxII. She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG CONTINUED

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillé."

xxxiii. The hall was clear'd—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
And dream'd their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then,—from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again return'd the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view,
O were his senses false or true!
Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now!

xxxiv. At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seem'd to walk, and speak of love;
She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recall'd the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fix'd his eye,
Where that huge falchion hung on high,

And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
 Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,
 Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
 He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

xxxv. The wild-rose, eglantine, and broom,
 Wasted around their rich perfume:
 The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,
 The aspens slept beneath the calm;
 The silver light, with quivering glance,
 Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
 Wild were the heart whose passions' sway
 Could rage beneath the sober ray!
 He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
 While thus he communed with his breast:—
 "Why is it, at each turn I trace
 Some memory of that exiled race?
 Can I not mountain-maiden spy,
 But she must bear the Douglas eye?
 Can I not view a Highland brand,
 But it must match the Douglas hand?
 Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
 But still the Douglas is the theme?
 I'll dream no more—by manly mind
 Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
 My midnight orisons said o'er,
 I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."
 His midnight orisons he told,
 A prayer with every bead of gold,
 Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
 And sunk in undisturb'd repose;
 Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
 And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

THE ISLAND

1. At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
 'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring
 Of life reviving, with reviving day;
 And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
 Wafting the stranger on his way again,
 Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,
 And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
 Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd
 Allan-bane!

SONG

- II. "Not faster yonder rowers' might
 Flings from their oars the spray,
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,
 That tracks the shallop's course in light,
 Melts in the lake away,
 Than men from memory erase
 The benefits of former days;
 Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
 Nor think again of the lonely isle."

"High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battle line,
 Good hawk and hound for silvan sport,
 Where beauty sees the brave resort,
 The honour'd meed be thine!
 True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
 Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
 And lost in love and friendship's smile
 Be memory of the lonely isle."

SONG CONTINUED

- III. "But if beneath yon southern sky
 A plaided stranger roam,
 Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
 And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
 Pine for his Highland home;
 Then, warrior, then be thine to show
 The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
 Remember then thy hap ere while,
 A stranger in the lonely isle."
- "Or if on life's uncertain main
 Mishap shall mar thy sail;
 If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
 Beneath the fickle gale;
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
 But come where kindred worth shall smile,
 To greet thee in the lonely isle."
- IV. As died the sounds upon the tide,
 The shallop reach'd the mainland side,
 And ere his onward way he took,
 The stranger cast a lingering look,
 Where easily his eye might reach
 The Harper on the islet beech,

Reclined against a blighted tree,
 As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
 To minstrel meditation given,
 His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
 As from the rising sun to claim
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seem'd watching the awakening fire;
 So still he sate, as those who wait
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair;
 So still, as life itself were fled,
 In the last sound his harp had sped.

v. Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,
 Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach?
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
 Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose?—
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
 And stop and turn to wave anew;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
 And prize such conquest of her eye!

vi. While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
 It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not;
 But when he turn'd him to the glade,
 One courteous parting sign she made;
 And after, oft the knight would say,
 That not when prize of festal day
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
 So highly did his bosom swell,
 As at that simple mute farewell.
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
 And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
 He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
 Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill;
 But when his stately form was hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid—
 “Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!”

'Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,—
 “Not so had Malcolm idly hung
 On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
 Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye,
 Another step than thine to spy.
 Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried,
 To the old Minstrel by her side,—
 “Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
 I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
 And warm thee with a noble name;
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme!”
 Scarce from her lip the word had rush'd,
 When deep the conscious maiden blush'd;
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

- VII. The Minstrel waked his harp—three times
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died.
 “Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,”
 Claspings his wither'd hands, he said,
 “Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain,
 Though all unwont to bid in vain.
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand
 Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann'd!
 I touch the chords of joy, but low
 And mournful answer notes of woe;
 And the proud march, which victors tread,
 Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
 O well for me, if mine alone
 That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
 If, as my tuneful fathers said,
 This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd,
 Can thus its master's fate foretell,
 Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

- VIII. “But ah! dear lady, thus it sigh'd
 The eve thy sainted mother died;
 And such the sounds which, while I strove
 To wake a lay of war or love,
 Came marring all the festal mirth,
 Appalling me who gave them birth,
 And, disobedient to my call,
 Wail'd loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,
 Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
 Were exiled from their native heaven.—
 Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe,
 My master's house must undergo,

Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
 Brood in these accents of despair,
 No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
 Triumph or rapture from thy string;
 One short, one final strain shall flow,
 Fraught with unutterable woe,
 Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
 Thy master cast him down and die!"

- ix. Soothing she answer'd him, "Assuage,
 Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age;
 All melodies to thee are known,
 That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
 From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then
 At times, unbidden notes should rise,
 Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
 Entangling, as they rush along,
 The war-march with the funeral song?—
 Small ground is now for boding fear;
 Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
 My sire, in native virtue great,
 Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
 Not then to fortune more resign'd,
 Than yonder oak might give the wind;
 The graceful foliage storms may reave,
 The noble stem they cannot grieve.
 For me,"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
 Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
 "For me, whose memory scarce conveys
 An image of more splendid days,
 This little flower, that loves the lea,
 May well my simple emblem be;
 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
 That in the king's own garden grows;
 And when I place it in my hair,
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

- x. Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
 Wiled the old harper's mood away.
 With such a look as hermits throw,
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrill'd to a tear, then thus replied:
 "Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
 The rank, the honours, thou hast lost!

O might I live to see thee grace,
 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
 To see my favourite's step advance,
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eye,
 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"—¹

- XI. "Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
 (Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd;)
 "Yet is this mossy rock to me
 Worth splendid chair and canopy;
 Nor would my footsteps spring more gay
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 To bend before my conquering eye,—
 Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
 That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch Lomond's side,
 Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
 A Lennox foray—for a day."—

- XII. The ancient bard his glee repress'd:
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;
 And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dared give—ah! woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer,
 Even the rude refuge we have here?
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
 Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
 Then, though an exile on the hill,

¹ The well-known cognisance of the Douglas family.

Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear;
 And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
 That thou mightst guide with silken thread,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread;
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane."—

xiii. "Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
 "My debts to Roderick's house I know:
 All that a mother could bestow,
 To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
 Since first an orphan in the wild
 She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child;
 To her brave chieftain son, from ire
 Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
 A deeper, holier debt is owed;
 And, could I pay it with my blood,
 Allan! Sir Roderick should command
 My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
 Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
 A votaress in Maronnan's cell;
 Rather through realms beyond the sea,
 Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
 An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
 Than wed the man she cannot love.

xiv. "Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses grey,—
 That pleading look, what can it say
 But what I own?—I grant him brave,
 But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
 And generous—save vindictive mood,
 Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
 I grant him true to friendly band,
 As his claymore is to his hand;
 But O! that very blade of steel
 More mercy for a foe would feel:
 I grant him liberal, to fling
 Among his clan the wealth they bring,
 When back by lake and glen they wind,
 And in the Lowland leave behind,
 Where once some pleasant hamlet stood
 A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
 The hand that for my father fought,
 I honour, as his daughter ought;
 But can I clasp it reeking red,

From peasants slaughter'd in their shed?
 No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
 They make his passions darker seem,
 And flash along his spirit high,
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
 While yet a child,—and children know,
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
 I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
 His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
 A maiden grown, I ill could bear
 His haughty mien and lordly air:
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
 I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
 To change such odious theme were best,—
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest? ”—

- xv. “What think I of him?—woe the while
 That brought such wanderer to our isle!
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe.
 If courtly spy hath harbour'd here,
 What may we for the Douglas fear?
 What for this island, deem'd of old
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray
 What yet may jealous Roderick say?
 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,
 Bethink thee of the discord dread
 That kindled, when at Beltane game
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme;
 Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
 Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
 No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
 Still is the canna's¹ hoary beard,
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
 And hark again! some pipe of war
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar.”

- xvi. Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
 Four darkening specks upon the tide,

¹ Cotton-grass.

That, slow enlarging on the view,
 Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
 And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
 Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
 The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
 And, to the windward as they cast,
 Against the sun they gave to shine
 The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine.
 Nearer and nearer as they bear,
 Spear, pikes, and axes flash in air.
 Now might you see the tartans brave,
 And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
 Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
 As his tough oar the rower plies;
 See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
 The wave ascending into smoke;
 See the proud pipers on the bow,
 And mark the gaudy streamers flow
 From their loud chanters¹ down, and sweep
 The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
 As, rushing through the lake amain,
 They plied the ancient Highland strain.

- xvii. Ever, as on they bore, more loud
 And louder rung the pibroch proud.
 At first the sound, by distance tame,
 Mellow'd along the waters came,
 And, lingering long by cape and bay,
 Wail'd every harsher note away;
 Then bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
 Those shrilling sounds, that call the might
 Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
 Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
 And, hurrying at the signal dread,
 The batter'd earth returns their tread.
 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
 Express'd their merry marching on,
 Ere peal of closing battle rose,
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
 And mimic din of stroke and ward,
 As broadsword upon target jarr'd;
 And groaning pause, ere yet again,
 Condensed, the battle yell'd amain;
 The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
 Retreat borne headlong into rout,
 And bursts of triumph, to declare

¹ The *pipe* of the bagpipe.

Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
 Nor ended thus the strain; but slow,
 Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,
 And changed the conquering clarion swell,
 For wild lament o'er those that fell.

- xviii. The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
 Were busy with their echoes still;
 And, when they slept, a vocal strain
 Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
 While loud a hundred clansmen raise
 Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
 Each boatman, bending to his oar,
 With measured sweep the burden bore,
 In such wild cadence, as the breeze
 Makes through December's leafless trees.
 The chorus first could Allan know,
 "Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
 And near, and nearer as they row'd,
 Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

BOAT SONG

- xix. Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
 Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine!
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
 Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
 While every Highland glen
 Sends our shout back agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"
 Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
 When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the
 mountain,
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
 Moor'd in the rifted rock,
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
 Mentieth and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his praise agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"
- xx. Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her
 side.

Widow and Saxon maid
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!
 O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to
 twine!
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthy such noble stem,
 Honour'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then
 Ring from the deepest glen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

xxi. With all her joyful female band,
 Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
 Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
 And high their snowy arms they threw,
 As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
 And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name;
 While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
 The darling passion of his heart,
 The Dame call'd Ellen to the strand,
 To greet her kinsman ere he land:
 "Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
 And shun to wreath a victor's brow?"—
 Reluctantly and slow, the maid
 The unwelcome summoning obey'd,
 And, when a distant bugle rung,
 In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
 "List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast,
 I hear my father's signal blast.
 Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
 And waft him from the mountain side."
 Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright
 She darted to her shallop light,
 And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd,
 For her dear form, his mother's band,
 The islet far behind her lay,
 And she had landed in the bay.

xxii. Some feelings are to mortals given,
 With less of earth in them than heaven:
 And if there be a human tear

From passion's dross refined and clear,
 A tear so limpid and so meek,
 It would not stain an angel's cheek,
 'Tis that which pious fathers shed
 Upon a duteous daughter's head!
 And as the Douglas to his breast
 His darling Ellen closely press'd,
 Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
 Though 'twas an hero's eye that weep'd.
 Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
 Mark'd she, that fear (affection's proof)
 Still held a graceful youth aloof;
 No! not till Douglas named his name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

xxiii. Allan, with wistful look the while,
 Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle;
 His master piteously he eyed,
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride.
 Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
 From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
 "Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
 I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,
 While many a minstrel answer'd loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name.
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
 Though the waned crescent own'd my might,
 And in my train troop'd lord and knight,
 Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome give more kind and true,
 Than aught my better fortunes knew.
 Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,
 O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

xxiv. Delightful praise!—Like summer rose,
 That brighter in the dew-drop glows,

The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took her favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweigh'd her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

- xxv. Of stature tall, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair of sunny hue,
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.
Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy:
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer:
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,
As play'd the feather on his crest.
Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

- xxvi. Now back they wend their watery way
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late return'd? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'Tis mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I stray'd,
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
Nor stray'd I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risk'd life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood,
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril ought for me agen."
- xxvii. Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Fail'd aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away,
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared,
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around
His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:—
- xxviii. "Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honour'd mother;—Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?—

And Græme; in whom I hope to know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy command,
 And leading in thy native land,—
 List all! —The King's vindictive pride
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
 Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
 To share their monarch's silvan game,
 Themselves in bloody toils were snared;
 And when the banquet they prepared,
 And wide their loyal portals flung,
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
 From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
 And from the silver Teviot's side;
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
 So faithless and so ruthless known,
 Now hither comes; his end the same,
 The same pretext of silvan game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
 By fate of Border chivalry.
 Yet more; amid Glenfinlas green,
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
 This by espial sure I know;
 Your counsel in the streight I show."

- xxix. Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's eye,
 Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
 This to her sire—that to her son.
 The hasty colour went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme;
 But from his glance it well appear'd,
 'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd;
 While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
 The Douglas thus his counsel said:—
 "Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass o'er;
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy bower;
 For well thou know'st, at this grey head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
 For thee, who, at thy King's command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant band,
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,
 Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.

Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
 Ellen and I will seek, apart,
 The refuge of some forest cell,
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
 Till on the mountain and the moor,
 The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er."—

xxx. "No, by mine honour," Roderick said;
 "So help me, heaven, and my good blade!
 No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
 My fathers' ancient crest and mine,
 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
 Hear my blunt speech: Grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 Will friends and allies flock enow;
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
 And, when I light the nuptial torch,
 A thousand villages in flames,
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
 —Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
 I meant not all my heart might say.—
 Small need of inroad, or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,
 Shall bootless turn him home agen."

xxx. There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er
 The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
 Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till waken'd by the morning beam;
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around,
 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,

Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
 As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
 By crossing terrors wildly toss'd,
 Still for the Douglas fearing most,
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
 To buy his safety with her hand.

xxxii. Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
 And eager rose to speak—but ere
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
 Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
 Where death seem'd combating with life;
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
 One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
 Left its domain as wan as clay.
 "Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
 "My daughter cannot be thy bride;
 Not that the blush to wooer dear,
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
 It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
 Will level a rebellious spear.
 'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
 To rein a steed and wield a brand;
 I see him yet, the princely boy!
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
 I love him still, despite my wrongs,
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
 O seek the grace you well may find,
 Without a cause to mine combined."

xxxiii. Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
 The waving of his tartans broad,
 And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
 With ire and disappointment vied,
 Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
 Like the ill Demon of the night,
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
 Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
 But, unrequited Love! thy dart
 Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
 And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
 At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
 While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,

With bitter drops were running o'er.
 The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope
 Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
 But, struggling with his spirit proud,
 Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,
 While every sob—so mute were all—
 Was heard distinctly through the hall.
 The son's despair, the mother's look;
 Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
 She rose, and to her side there came,
 To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

xxxiv. Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
 As flashes flame through sable smoke,
 Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
 To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
 So the deep anguish of despair
 Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
 With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
 "Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,
 "Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
 The lesson I so lately taught?
 This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
 Thank thou for punishment delay'd."
 Eager as greyhound on his game,
 Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
 "Perish my name, if aught afford
 Its Chieftain safety save his sword!"
 Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
 Gripped to the dagger or the brand,
 And death had been—but Douglas rose,
 And thrust between the struggling foes
 His giant strength:—"Chieftains, forego!
 I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
 Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
 What! is the Douglas fall'n so far,
 His daughter's hand is doom'd the spoil
 Of such dishonourable broil!"
 Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
 As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
 And each upon his rival glared,
 With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

xxxv. Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
 Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
 And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
 As, falter'd through terrific dream.
 Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,

And veil'd his wrath in scornful word.
 "Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
 Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
 Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,
 The pageant pomp of earthly man.
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
 Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
 Malise, what ho!"—his henchman came;
 "Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."
 Young Malcolm answer'd, calm and bold,
 "Fear nothing for thy favourite hold;
 The spot, an angel deigned to grace,
 Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.
 Thy churlish courtesy for those
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
 As safe to me the mountain way
 At midnight as in blaze of day,
 Though with his boldest at his back
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
 Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
 Nought here of parting will I say.
 Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
 So secret, but we meet agen.—
 Chieftain! we too shall find an hour."—
 He said, and left the silvan bower.

xxxvi. Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
 (Such was the Douglas's command,)
 And anxious told, how, on the morn,
 The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
 The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
 Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
 Much were the peril to the Græme,
 From those who to the signal came;
 Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
 Himself would row him to the strand.
 He gave his counsel to the wind,
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll'd,
 His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
 And stripp'd his limbs to such array,
 As best might suit the watery way,—

xxxvii. Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
 Pattern of old fidelity!"
 The Minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,—
 "O! could I point a place of rest!"

My sovereign holds in ward my land,
 My uncle leads my vassal band;
 To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
 Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
 Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
 Who loves the Chieftain of his name,
 Not long shall honour'd Douglas dwell,
 Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
 Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber dare,—
 I may not give the rest to air!
 Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
 Not the poor service of a boat,
 To waft me to yon mountain-side."
 Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
 Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
 And stoutly steer'd him from the shore;
 And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
 Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
 Darkening across each puny wave,
 To which the moon her silver gave,
 Fast as the cormorant could skim,
 The swimmer plied each active limb;
 Then landing in the moonlight dell,
 Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
 The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
 And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD

THE GATHERING

1. Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
 Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
 And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
 Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
 How are they blotted from the things that be!
 How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
 Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
 Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
 To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his
 ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
 How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
 Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
 And solitary heath, the signal knew;
 And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
 What time the warning note was keenly wound,

What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
 While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering
 sound,
 And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor,
 round.

II. The summer dawn's reflected hue
 To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
 Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kiss'd the Lake, just stirr'd the trees,
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
 The mountain-shadows on her breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemm'd with dew-drops, led her fawn;
 The grey mist left the mountain side,
 The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
 Invisible in flecked sky,
 The lark sent down her revelry;
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
 In answer coo'd the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III. No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
 With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
 And eyed the rising sun, and laid
 His hand on his impatient blade.
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
 Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
 For such Antiquity had taught
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
 The Cross of Fire should take its road.
 The shrinking band stood oft aghast
 At the impatient glance he cast;—
 Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
 As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
 She spread her dark sails on the wind,
 And, high in middle heaven, reclined,
 With her broad shadow on the lake,
 Silenced the warblers of the brake.

- iv. A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.
The hallow'd creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase call'd off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.
- v. Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flush'd and full,

For heath-bell with her purple bloom,
 Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
 All night, in this sad glen, the maid
 Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
 —She said, no shepherd sought her side,
 No hunter's hand her snood untied,
 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
 The virgin snood did Alice wear;
 Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
 Her maiden girdle all too short,
 Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
 Or holy church or blessed rite,
 But lock'd her secret in her breast,
 And died in travail, unconfess'd.

- vi. Alone, among his young compeers,
 Was Brian from his infant years;
 A moody and heart-broken boy,
 Estranged from sympathy and joy,
 Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
 On his mysterious lineage flung.
 Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
 To wood and stream his hap to wail,
 Till, frantic, he as truth received
 What of his birth the crowd believed,
 And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
 To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
 In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
 The cloister oped her pitying gate;
 In vain, the learning of the age
 Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;
 Even in its treasures he could find
 Food for the fever of his mind.
 Eager he read whatever tells
 Of magic, cabala, and spells,
 And every dark pursuit allied
 To curious and presumptuous pride;
 Till with fired brain and nerves o'er-strung,
 And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
 Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
 And hid him from the haunts of men.
- vii. The desert gave him visions wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's child.
 Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
 He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
 Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
 Beheld the River Demon rise;
 The mountain mist took form and limb,

Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 Swell'd with the voices of the dead;
 Far on the future battle-heath
 His eye beheld the ranks of death:
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurl'd,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind;
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
 Of charging steeds, careering fast
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
 The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
 All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
 He girt his loins, and came to show
 The signals of impending woe,
 And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII. 'Twas all prepared;—and from the rock,
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
 Before the kindling pile was laid,
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
 Patient the sickening victim eyed
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
 Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
 A slender crosslet form'd with care,
 A cubit's length in measure due;
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
 Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
 The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high,
 With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,
 While his anathema he spoke.

IX. "Woe to the clansman, who shall view
 This symbol of sepulchral yew,
 Forgetful that its branches grew
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
 On Alpine's dwelling low!

Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
 Each clansman's execration just
 Shall doom him wrath and woe."
 He paused;—the word the vassals took,
 With forward step and fiery look,
 On high their naked brands they shook,
 Their clattering targets wildly strook;
 And first in murmur low,
 Then, like the billow in his course,
 That far to seaward finds his source,
 And flings to shore his muster'd force,
 Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
 " Woe to the traitor, woe! "
 Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
 The joyous wolf from covert drew,
 The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
 They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

- x. The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
 The monk resumed his mutter'd spell:
 Dismal and low its accents came,
 The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
 And the few words that reach'd the air,
 Although the holiest name was there,
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
 But when he shook above the crowd
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
 " Woe to the wretch who fails to rear
 At this dread sign the ready spear!
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,
 His home, the refuge of his fear,
 A kindred fate shall know;
 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
 While maids and matrons on his name
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
 And infamy and woe."
 Then rose the cry of females, shrill
 As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
 Denouncing misery and ill,
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
 Of curses stammer'd slow;
 Answering, with imprecation dread,
 " Sunk be his home in embers red!
 And cursed be the meanest shed
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head,
 We doom to want and woe! "

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
 And the grey pass where birches wave,
 On Beala-nam-bo.

- xI. Then deeper paused the priest anew,
 And hard his labouring breath he drew,
 While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
 And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,
 He meditated curse more dread,
 And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
 Who, summon'd to his Chieftain's aid,
 The signal saw and disobey'd.
 The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,
 He quench'd among the bubbling blood,
 And, as again the sign he rear'd,
 Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
 "When flits this Cross from man to man,
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
 Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
 Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
 May ravens tear the careless eyes,
 Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
 As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
 So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth!
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction dark,
 And be the grace to him denied,
 Bought by this sign to all beside!"
 He ceased; no echo gave agen
 The murmur of the deep Amen.
- xII. Then Roderick, with impatient look,
 From Brian's hand the symbol took:
 "Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
 The crosslet to his henchman brave.
 "The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
 Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
 Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
 A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
 High stood the henchman on the prow;
 So rapidly the barge-men row,
 The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat,
 Were all unbroken and afloat,
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,
 When it had near'd the mainland hill;
 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom wide,
 When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and brand.

xiii. Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
 On fleeter foot was never tied.
 Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
 Thine active sinews never braced.
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its crest;
 With short and springing footstep pass
 The trembling bog and false morass;
 Across the brook like roebuck bound,
 And thread the brake like questing hound;
 The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
 Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
 Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
 Yet by the fountain pause not now;
 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
 Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
 The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
 Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
 Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
 With rivals in the mountain race;
 But danger, death, and warrior deed,
 Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

xiv. Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
 In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
 From winding glen, from upland brown,
 They pour'd each hardy tenant down.
 Nor slack'd the messenger his pace;
 He show'd the sign, he named the place,
 And, pressing forward like the wind,
 Left clamour and surprise behind.
 The fisherman forsook the strand,
 The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
 With changed cheer, the mower blithe
 Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe;
 The herds without a keeper stray'd,
 The plough was in mid-furrow staid,
 The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,
 The hunter left the stag at bay;
 Prompt at the signal of alarms,
 Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;
 So swept the tumult and affray
 Along the margin of Achray.
 Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
 Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
 The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
 So stilly on thy bosom deep,
 The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
 Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

- xv. Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
 Half hidden in the copse so green;
 There mayest thou rest, thy labour done,
 Their Lord shall speed the signal on.—
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
 The henchman shot him down the way.
 —What woeful accents load the gale?
 The funeral yell, the female wail!
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
 A valiant warrior fights no more.
 Who, in the battle or the chase,
 At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—
 Within the hall, where torches' ray
 Supplies the excluded beams of day,
 Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
 And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
 His stripling son stands mournful by,
 His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
 The village maids and matrons round
 The dismal coronach resound.

CORONACH

- xvi. He is gone on the mountain,
 He is lost to the forest,
 Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the soarest.
 The font, reappearing,
 From the rain-drops shall borrow,
 But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow!
 The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory.
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing,
 When blighting was nearest.
- Fleet foot on the correi,
 Sage counsel in cumber,
 Red hand in the foray,
 How sound is thy slumber!
 Like the dew on the mountain,
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone, and for ever!

xvii. See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
 His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
 Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
 Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
 Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
 As if some stranger step he hears.
 'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
 But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
 The henchman bursts into the hall;
 Before the dead man's bier he stood;
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood;
 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
 Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

xviii. Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
 Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
 In haste the stripling to his side
 His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
 But when he saw his mother's eye
 Watch him in speechless agony,
 Back to her open'd arms he flew,
 Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
 "Alas!" she sobbed,—“and yet, be gone,
 And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!”
 One look he cast upon the bier,
 Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,
 Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
 And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
 Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
 First he essays his fire and speed,
 He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
 Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
 Suspended was the widow's tear,
 While yet his footsteps she could hear;
 And when she mark'd the henchman's eye
 Wet with unwonted sympathy,
 "Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
 That should have sped thine errand on;
 The oak has fall'n,—the sapling bough
 Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
 Yet trust I well, his duty done,
 The orphan's God will guard my son.—
 And you, in many a danger true,
 At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
 To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
 Let babes and women wail the dead."

Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
 Resounded through the funeral hall,
 While from the walls the attendant band
 Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand;
 And short and flitting energy
 Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
 As if the sounds to warrior dear,
 Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
 But faded soon that borrow'd force;
 Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

- xix. Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
 It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
 O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
 Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
 The tear that gather'd in his eye
 He left the mountain breeze to dry;
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with green,
 The chapel of St. Bride was seen.
 Swollen was the stream, remote the bridge,
 But Angus paused not on the edge;
 Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
 Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,
 He dash'd amid the torrent's roar:
 His right hand high the crosslet bore,
 His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
 And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high,
 With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
 And had he fall'n,—for ever there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife,
 Until the opposing bank he gain'd,
 And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

- xx. A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the chapel of St. Bride.
 Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
 To Norman, heir of Armandave.
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their march.
 In rude, but glad procession, came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
 And plaided-youth, with jest and jeer,
 Which snooded maiden would not hear;
 And children, that, unwitting why,

Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
 And minstrels, that in measures vied
 Before the young and bonny bride,
 Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
 The tear and blush of morning rose.
 With virgin step, and bashful hand,
 She held the 'kerchief's snowy band;
 The gallant bridegroom by her side,
 Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
 And the glad mother in her ear
 Was closely whispering word of cheer.

xxi. Who meets them at the churchyard gate?
 The messenger of fear and fate!
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his eyes.
 All dripping from the recent flood,
 Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the appointed word:
 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
 Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
 And must he change so soon the hand,
 Just link'd to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
 And must the day, so blithe that rose,
 And promised rapture in the close,
 Before its setting hour, divide
 The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
 O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
 Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
 Her summons dread, brook no delay;
 Stretch to the race—away! away!

xxii. Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
 And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
 Until he saw the starting tear
 Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
 Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
 —What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?
 The sickening pang of hope deferr'd,
 And memory, with a torturing train
 Of all his morning visions vain.
 Mingled with love's impatience, came
 The manly thirst for martial fame;
 The stormy joy of mountaineers,

Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
 And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field returning,
 With war's red honours on his crest,
 To clasp his Mary to his breast.
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,
 While high resolve, and feeling strong,
 Burst into voluntary song.

SONG

- xxiii. The heath this night must be my bed,
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
 My couch may be my bloody plaid,
 My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
 It will not waken me, Mary!
 I may not, dare not, fancy now
 The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
 I dare not think upon thy vow,
 And all it promised me, Mary.
 No fond regret must Norman know;
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
 His heart must be like bended bow,
 His foot like arrow free, Mary.
- A time will come with feeling fraught,
 For, if I fall in battle fought,
 Thy hapless lover's dying thought
 Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
 And if return'd from conquer'd foes,
 How blithely will the evening close,
 How sweet the linnet sing repose,
 To my young bride and me, Mary!

- xxiv. Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
 Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
 Rushing, in conflagration strong,
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,
 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
 And reddening the dark lakes below;
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
 The signal roused to martial coil
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
 Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course;

Thence southward turn'd its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
Muster'd its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood ;
Each train'd to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

- xxv. That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce ;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednoch courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con ;
All seem'd at peace.—Now, wot ye why
The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scann'd with care?—
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left ;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequester'd dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung ;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And call'd the grot the Goblin-cave.

- xxvi. It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast ;

Its trench had staid full many a rock,
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
 From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
 And form'd the rugged silvan grot.
 The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden shone
 Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
 No murmur waked the solemn still,
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
 But when the wind chafed with the lake,
 A sullen sound would upward break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
 The incessant war of wave and rock.
 Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
 Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern grey.
 From such a den the wolf had sprung,
 In such the wild-cat leaves her young;
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
 Sought for a space their safety there.
 Grey Superstition's whisper dread
 Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread;
 For there, she said, did fays resort,
 And satyrs¹ hold their silvan court,
 By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
 And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

- XXVII. Now eve, with western shadows long,
 Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
 When Roderick, with a chosen few,
 Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.
 Above the Goblin-cave they go,
 Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo:
 The prompt retainers speed before,
 To launch the shallop from the shore,
 For cross Loch Katrine lies his way
 To view the passes of Achray,
 And place his clansmen in array.
 Yet lags the chief in musing mind,
 Unwonted sight, his men behind.
 A single page, to bear his sword,
 Alone attended on his lord;
 The rest their way through thickets break,
 And soon await him by the lake.

¹ The *Urisk*, or Highland satyr

It was a fair and gallant sight,
 To view them from the neighbouring height,
 By the low-levell'd sunbeams light!
 For strength and stature, from the clan
 Each warrior was a chosen man,
 As even afar might well be seen,
 By their proud step and martial mien.
 Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
 Their targets gleam, as by the boat
 A wild and warlike group they stand,
 That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII. Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
 Was lingering on the craggy hill,
 Hard by where turn'd apart the road
 To Douglas's obscure abode.
 It was but with that dawning morn,
 That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
 To drown his love in war's wild roar,
 Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
 But he who stems a stream with sand,
 And fetters flame with flaxen band,
 Has yet a harder task to prove—
 By firm resolve to conquer love!
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
 Still hovering near his treasure lost;
 For though his haughty heart deny
 A parting meeting to his eye,
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
 The accents of her voice to hear,
 And inly did he curse the breeze
 That waked to sound the rustling trees.
 But hark! what mingles in the strain?
 It is the harp of Allan-bane,
 That wakes its measure slow and high,
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
 What melting voice attends the strings!
 'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

XXIX. *Ave Maria!* maiden mild!
 Listen to a maiden's prayer!
 Thou canst hear though from the wild,
 Thou canst save amid despair,
 Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
 Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—
 Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
 Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria ! undefiled !

The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled ;
Then, Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer ;
Mother, list a suppliant child !

Ave Maria !

Ave Maria ! stainless styled !

Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled ;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child !

Ave Maria !

xxx. Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then while his plaid he round him cast,
" It is the last time—'tis the last,"
He mutter'd thrice,—" the last time e'er
That angel voice shall Roderick hear ! "
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side ;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant 'cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where muster'd, in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

xxxI. A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray'd ;
But most with mantles folded round,
Were couch'd to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was match'd the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green ;

Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times return'd the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And silence claim'd her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

THE PROPHECY

- I. "The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad
wave.
- II. Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark! on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
Art thou return'd from Braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
(For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
"Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said.—
"Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
Then call'd a slumberer by his side,
And stirr'd him with his slacken'd bow—
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the track,
Keep eagle watch till I come back."

- III. Together up the pass they sped:
 "What of the foemen?" Norman said.—
 "Varying reports from near and far;
 This certain,—that a band of war
 Has for two days been ready boune,
 At prompt command, to march from Doune;
 King James, the while, with princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
 Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
 "What! know ye not that Roderick's care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the clan,
 And every child and aged man
 Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest secure?"—
- IV. "'Tis well advised—the Chieftain's plan
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
 Apart from all his followers true?"—
 "It is, because last evening-tide
 Brian an augury hath tried,
 Of that dread kind which must not be
 Unless in dread extremity,
 The Taghairm call'd; by which, afar,
 Our sires foresaw the events of war.
 Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
 The choicest of the prey we had,
 When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
 His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
 His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;
 So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,
 And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
 Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
 But steep and flinty was the road,
 And sharp the hurrying pikemen's goad,

And when we came to Dennan's Row,
A child might scatheless stroke his brow."—

NORMAN

- v. "That bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretch'd the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couch'd on a shelve beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the Chief;—but hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE

- "Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, glean'd from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."
- vi. And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word:—
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endow'd with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
The curtain of the future world.
Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, my eyeballs dim,

My soul with harrowing anguish torn,—
 This for my Chieftain have I borne!—
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 An human tongue may ne'er avouch;
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.
 At length the fatal answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
 But borne and branded on my soul;—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE!"—

- VII. "Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow:
 A spy has sought my land this morn;—
 No eve shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring him down.
 —But see, who comes his news to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?"—

- VIII. "At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.
 I saw the Moray's silver star,
 And mark'd the sable pale of Mar."—
 "By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
 Will see them here for battle boune."¹
 "Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
 But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
 Strengthen'd by them, we well might bide
 The battle on Benledi's side.
 Thou couldst not?—Well! Clan-Alpine's men
 Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen;
 Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight,

¹ *For battle boune*—ready for battle.

All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
 Each for his hearth and household fire,
 Father for child, and son for sire,—
 Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
 Or dost thou come, ill omen'd tear!
 A messenger of doubt or fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon lance
 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce through
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
 'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
 Each to his post!—all know their charge.”
 The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
 The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
 Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
 —I turn me from the martial roar,
 And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

- ix. Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
 And Ellen sits on the grey stone
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 Are pour'd on her unheeding ear.—
 “He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
 With joy return;—he will—he must.
 Well was it time to seek, afar,
 Some refuge from impending war,
 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
 Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
 I saw their boats, with many a light,
 Floating the live-long yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 By the red streamers of the north;
 I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
 Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side,
 Like wild-ducks couching in the fen,
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the mainland side,
 Shall not thy noble father's care
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare?”—

ELLEN

- x. “No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
 My wakeful terrors could not blind.
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,
 Douglas a parting blessing gave,

The tear that glisten'd in his eye
 Drown'd not his purpose fix'd on high.
 My soul, though feminine and weak,
 Can image his; e'en as the lake,
 Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,
 Reflects the invulnerable rock.
 He hears report of battle rife,
 He deems himself the cause of strife.
 I saw him redden, when the theme
 Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream,
 Of Malcolm Græme, in fetters bound,
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
 Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
 Oh no! 'twas apprehensive thought
 For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
 (Let me be just) that friend so true;
 In danger both, and in our cause!
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
 Why else that solemn warning given,
 'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!'—
 Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
 If eve return him not again,
 Am I to hie, and make me known?
 Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
 Buys his friend's safety with his own;—
 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"—

- xi. "Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane
 As fitting place to meet again.
 Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,—
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
 My vision'd sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,
 And think upon the harpings slow,
 That presaged this approaching woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.
 Would we had left this dismal spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
 Of such a wondrous tale I know—
 Dear lady, change that look of woe,
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."—

ELLEN

“ Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear.”
The Minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen’s heart.

BALLAD

Alice Brand

XII. Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry
And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

“ O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

“ O Alice, ’twas all for thy locks so bright,
And ’twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

“ Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

“ And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must sheer from the slaughter’d deer,
To keep the cold away.”—

“ O Richard! if my brother died,
’Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

“ If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we’ll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest green.

“ And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.”

BALLAD CONTINUED

- xiii. 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
 So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
 On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
 Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
 Who won'd within the hill,—
 Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd church,
 His voice was ghostly shrill.

“Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
 Our moonlight circle's screen?
 Or who comes here to chase the deer,
 Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
 Or who may dare on wold to wear
 The fairies fatal green?”

“Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
 For thou wert christen'd man;
 For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
 For mutter'd word or ban.

“Lay on him the curse of the wither'd heart,
 The curse of the sleepless eye;
 Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
 Nor yet find leave to die.”

BALLAD CONTINUED

- xiv. 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
 Though the birds have still'd their singing;
 The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
 And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
 Before Lord Richard stands,
 And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
 “I fear not sign,” quoth the grisly elf,
 “That is made with bloody hands.”

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
 That woman, void of fear,—
 “And if there's blood upon his hand,
 'Tis but the blood of deer.”—

“Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
 It cleaves unto his hand,
 The stain of thine own kindly blood,
 The blood of Ethert Brand.”

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
 And made the holy sign,—
 “ And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
 A spotless hand is mine.

“ And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
 By Him whom Demons fear,
 To show us whence thou art thyself,
 And what thine errand here? ”—

BALLAD CONTINUED

xv. “ 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,
 When fairy birds are singing,
 When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
 With bit and bridle ringing:

“ And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
 But all is glistening show,
 Like the idle gleam that December's beam
 Can dart on ice and snow.

“ And fading, like that varied gleam,
 Is our inconstant shape,
 Who now like knight and lady seem,
 And now like dwarf and ape.

“ It was between the night and day,
 When the Fairy King has power,
 That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
 And, 'twixt life and death, was snatch'd away
 To the joyless Elfin bower.

“ But wist I of a woman bold,
 Who thrice my brow durst sign,
 I might regain my mortal mold,
 As fair a form as thine.”

She cross'd him once—she cross'd him twice—
 That lady was so brave;
 The fouler grew his goblin hue,
 The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him thrice, that lady bold;
 He rose beneath her hand
 The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
 Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
 When the mavis and merle are singing,
 But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
 When all the bells were ringing.

xvi. Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climb'd the steepy glade:
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream:
"O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?"—
"An evil hap how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,
And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
"The happy path!—what! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
"O haste thee, Allan, to the kern,
—Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure!—
What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here."—

xvii. "Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weigh'd with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower"—
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;

And how, O how, can I atone
 The wreck my vanity brought on!—
 One way remains—I'll tell him all—
 Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
 Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
 Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
 But first—my father is a man
 Outlaw'd and exiled, under ban;
 The price of blood is on his head,
 With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
 Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth!
 Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
 If yet he is!—exposed for me
 And mine to dread extremity—
 Thou hast the secret of my heart;
 Forgive, be generous, and depart! ”

xviii. Fitz-James knew every wily train
 A lady's fickle heart to gain;
 But here he knew and felt them vain.
 There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
 To give her steadfast speech the lie;
 In maiden confidence she stood,
 Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
 And told her love with such a sigh
 Of deep and hopeless agony,
 As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
 And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
 Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
 But not with hope fled sympathy.
 He proffer'd to attend her side,
 As brother would a sister guide.—
 “O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
 Safer for both we go apart.
 O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
 If thou may'st trust yon wily kern.”
 With hand upon his forehead laid,
 The conflict of his mind to shade,
 A parting step or two he made;
 Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,
 He paused, and turn'd, and came again.

xix. “Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
 This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
 And bade, when I had boon to crave,
 To bring it back, and boldly claim
 The recompense that I would name.

Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
 But one who lives by lance and sword,
 Whose castle is his helm and shield,
 His lordship the embattled field.
 What from a prince can I demand,
 Who neither reck of state nor land?
 Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
 Each guard and usher knows the sign.
 Seek thou the king without delay;
 This signet shall secure thy way;
 And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
 As ransom of his pledge to me.”
 He placed the golden circlet on,
 Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone
 The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
 So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
 He join'd his guide, and wending down
 The ridges of the mountain brown,
 Across the stream they took their way,
 That joins Lach Katrine to Achray.

xx. All in the Trosach's glen was still,
 Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
 Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high—
 “Murdoch! was that a signal cry?”—
 He stammer'd forth,—“I shout to scare
 Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
 He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
 His own brave steed:—“Ah! gallant grey!
 For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
 We ne'er had seen the Trosach's dell.—
 Murdoch, move first—but silently;
 Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!”
 Jealous and sullen on they fared,
 Each silent, each upon his guard,

xxi. Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
 Around a precipice's edge,
 When lo! a wasted female form,
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
 In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
 Stood on a cliff beside the way,
 And glancing round her restless eye,
 Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
 Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy.
 Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom;
 With gesture wild she waved a plume
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing;

Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shriek'd till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,
For then the Lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung—
She sung!—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

SONG

XXII. They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my wintry day!

'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
They made me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn they said,
And my true love would meet me there.
But woe betide the cruel guile,
That drown'd in blood the morning smile!
And woe betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII. "Who is this maid? what means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle grey,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."—
"'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
"A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick foray'd Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquer'd blade,
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
"Now, if thou strikest her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far

As ever peasant pitch'd a bar! "—
 "Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried,
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's side.
 "See the grey pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true-love through the air?
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume!
 No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall batten on his bones,
 And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid air staid,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free,
 Meet signal for their revelry."—

- xxiv. "Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"—
 "O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.—
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green;
 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

"For O my sweet William was forester true,
 He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
 His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
 And so blithely he trill'd the Lowland lay!

"It was not that I meant to tell . . .
 But thou art wise and guessest well."
 Then, in a low and broken tone,
 And hurried note, the song went on.
 Still on the Clansman, fearfully,
 She fix'd her apprehensive eye;
 Then turn'd it on the Knight, and then
 Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

- xxv. "The toils are pitch'd, and the stakes are set,
 Ever sing merrily, merrily;
 The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
 Hunters live so cheerily.

"It was a stag, a stag of ten,
 Bearing its branches sturdily;
 He came stately down the glen,
 Ever sing hardily, hardily.

"It was there he met with a wounded doe,
 She was bleeding deathfully;
 She warn'd him of the toils below,
 O, so faithfully, faithfully!

“ He had an eye, and he could heed,
 Ever sing warily, warily;
 He had a foot, and he could speed—
 Hunters watch so narrowly.”

xxvi. Fitz-James's mind was passion-toss'd,
 When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;
 But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
 And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
 Not like a stag that spies the snare,
 But lion of the hunt aware,
 He waved at once his blade on high,
 “ Disclose thy treachery, or die! ”
 Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
 But in his race his bow he drew.
 The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
 And thrill'd in Blanche's faded breast,—
 Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
 For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
 With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
 The fierce avenger is behind!
 Fate judges of the rapid strife—
 The forfeit death—the prize is life!
 Thy kindred ambush lies before,
 Close couch'd upon the heathery moor;
 Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
 Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er shalt see,
 The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
 —Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
 As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
 With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
 Ere he can win his blade again.
 Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon eye,
 He grimly smiled to see him die;
 Then slower wended back his way,
 Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

xxvii. She sate beneath the birchen-tree,
 Her elbow resting on her knee;
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
 And gazed on it, and feebly laugh'd;
 Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
 Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
 The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried,—
 “ Stranger, it is in vain! ” she cried.
 “ This hour of death has given me more
 Of reason's power than year's before;
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,
 My frenzied visions fade away.

A helpless injured wretch I die,
 And something tells me in thine eye,
 That thou wert mine avenger born.—
 Seest thou this tress!—O! still I've worn
 This little tress of yellow hair,
 Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
 It once was bright and clear as thine,
 But blood and tears have dimm'd its shine.
 I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
 Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
 My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
 And thou wilt bring it me again.—
 I waver still.—O God! more bright
 Let reason beam her parting light!—
 O! by thy knighthood's honour'd sign,
 And for thy life preserved by mine,
 When thou shalt see a darksome man,
 Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's Clan,
 With tartan's broad and shadowy plume,
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!
 They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell.”

- xxviii. A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
 Fast pour'd his eyes at pity's claims,
 And now with mingled grief and ire,
 He saw the murder'd maid expire.
 “God, in my need, be my relief,
 As I wreak this on yonder Chief!”
 A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
 He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
 The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
 And placed it on his bonnet-side:
 “By Him whose word is truth! I swear,
 No other favour will I wear,
 Till this sad token I imbrue
 In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
 —But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
 The chase is up,—but they shall know,
 The stag at bay's a dangerous foe.”
 Barr'd from the known but guarded way,
 Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
 And oft must change his desperate track,
 By stream and precipice turn'd back.
 Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,

From lack of food and loss of strength,
 He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
 And thought his toils and perils o'er:—
 "Of all my rash adventures past,
 This frantic feat must prove the last!
 Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
 That all this Highland hornet's nest
 Would muster up in swarms so soon
 As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—
 Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
 Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—
 If farther through the wilds I go,
 I only fall upon the foe:
 I'll couch me here till evening grey,
 Then darkling try my dangerous way."

xxix. The shades of eve come slowly down,
 The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,
 The owl awakens from her dell,
 The fox is heard upon the fell;
 Enough remains of glimmering light
 To guide the wanderer's steps aright.
 Yet not enough from far to show
 His figure to the watchful foe.
 With cautious step, and ear awake,
 He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
 And not the summer solstice, there,
 Temper'd the midnight mountain air,
 But every breeze, that swept the wold,
 Benumb'd his drenched limbs with cold.
 In dread, in danger, and alone,
 Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
 Tangled and steep, he journey'd on;
 Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
 A watch-fire close before him burn'd.

xxx. Beside its embers red and clear,
 Bask'd, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
 And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
 "Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—
 "A stranger."—"What dost thou require?"—
 "Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
 My life's beset, my path is lost,
 The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost."—
 "Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
 "Thou darkest not call thyself a foe?"—
 "I dare! to him and all the band
 He brings to aid his murderous hand."—
 "Bold words!—but, though the beast of game

The privilege of chase may claim,
 Though space and law the stag we lend,
 Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
 Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
 The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?
 Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
 Who say thou camest a secret spy!"—
 "They do, by heaven!—Come, Roderick Dhu,
 And of his clan the boldest two,
 And let me but till morning rest,
 I write the falsehood on their crest."—
 "If by the blaze I mark aright,
 Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."—
 "Then by these tokens mayest thou know
 Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
 "Enough, enough; sit down and share
 A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."

- xxxI. He gave him of his Highland cheer,
 The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;
 Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
 And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
 He tended him like welcome guest,
 Then thus his farther speech address'd.
 "Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
 A clansman born, a kinsman true;
 Each word against his honour spoke,
 Demands of me avenging stroke;
 Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
 A mighty augury is laid.
 It rests with me to wind my horn,—
 Thou art with numbers overborne;
 It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
 Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
 But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
 Will I depart from honour's laws;
 To assail a wearied man were shame,
 And stranger is a holy name;
 Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
 In vain he never must require.
 Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
 Myself will guide thee on the way,
 O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
 Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
 As far as Coilantogle's ford;
 From thence thy warrant is thy sword."—
 "I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
 As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
 "Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry

Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
 With that he shook the gather'd heath,
 And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
 And the brave foemen, side by side,
 Lay peaceful down, like brothers tried,
 And slept until the dawning beam
 Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COMBAT

- I. Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,
 When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
 It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
 And silvers o'er the torrents foaming tide,
 And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
 Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
 Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
 Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
 Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the
 brow of War.
- II. That early beam, so fair and sheen,
 Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
 When, rousing at its glimmer red,
 The warriors left their lowly bed,
 Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
 Mutter'd their soldier matins by,
 And then awaked their fire, to steal,
 As short and rude, their soldier meal.
 That o'er, the Gael around him threw
 His graceful plaid of varied hue,
 And, true to promise, led the way,
 By thicket green and mountain grey.
 A wildering path!—they winded now
 Along the precipice's brow,
 Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
 The windings of the Forth and Teith,
 And all the vales beneath that lie,
 Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
 Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
 Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.
 'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
 Assistance from the hand to gain;
 So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
 Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—

That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

- III. At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrents down had borne,
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds? traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.
- IV. " Brave Gael, my pass in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
" I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,
All seem'd as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."—
" Yet why a second venture try ?"—
" A warrior thou, and ask me why!—
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws.
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide

A Knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,
The merry glance of mountain maid:
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone.”—

- v. Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar? ”
—“ No, by my word;—of bands prepared
To guard King James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.”—
“ Free be they flung!—for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewilder'd in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vow'd and mortal foe? ”—
“ Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlaw'd desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabb'd a knight:
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart.”

- vi. Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lower'd the clansman's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
“ And heard'st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard'st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What reck'd the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven.”—
“ Still was it outrage;—yet, 'tis true,
Not then claim'd sovereignty his due;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of command,
The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.

But then, thy Chieftain's robber life!—
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
 Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland swain
 His herds and harvest rear'd in vain.—
 Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn
 The spoils from such foul foray borne."

- VII. The Gael beheld him grim the while,
 And answer'd with disdainful smile,—
 "Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
 I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
 Far to the south and east, where lay,
 Extended in succession gay,
 Deep waving fields and pastures green,
 With gentle slopes and groves between:—
 These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
 Were once the birthright of the Gael;
 The stranger came with iron hand,
 And from our fathers reft the land.
 Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
 Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
 Ask we this savage hill we tread,
 For fatten'd steer or household bread;
 Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
 And well the mountain might reply,—
 'To you, as to your sires of yore,
 Belong the target and claymore!
 I give you shelter in my breast,
 Your own good blades must win the rest.'
 Pent in this fortress of the North,
 Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
 To spoil the spoiler as we may,
 And from the robber rend the prey?
 Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
 But one along yon river's maze,—
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
 Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold,
 That plundering Lowland field and fold
 Is aught but retribution true?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."—

- VIII. Answer'd Fitz-James,—“And, if I sought,
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?”—
 “As of a meed to rashness due:

Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;
 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—

“ Well, let it pass; nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride:
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
 In peace; but when I come agen,
 I come with banner, brand, and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.
 For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
 Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
 As I, until before me stand
 This rebel Chieftain and his band! ”—

- ix. “ Have, then, thy wish! ”—he whistled shrill,
 And he was answer'd from the hill;
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,
 From crag to crag the signal flew.
 Instant, through copse and heath, arose
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
 On right, on left, above, below,
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
 From shingles grey their lances start,
 The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
 The rushes and the willow-wand
 Are bristling into axe and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
 That whistle garrison'd the glen
 At once with full five hundred men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given.
 Watching their leader's beck and will,
 All silent there they stood, and still.
 Like the loose crags, whose threatening mass
 Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
 As if an infant's touch could urge
 Their headlong passage down the verge,
 With step and weapon forward flung,
 Upon the mountain-side they hung.
 The Mountaineer cast glance of pride

Along Benledi's living side,
 Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
 Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
 And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"

- x. Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
 The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
 He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
 Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,
 His back against a rock he bore,
 And firmly placed his foot before:—
 "Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
 From its firm base as soon as I."
 Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
 Respect was mingled with surprise,
 And the stern joy which warriors feel
 In foemen worthy of their steel.
 Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
 Down sunk the disappearing band;
 Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
 In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
 Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
 In osiers pale and corses low;
 It seem'd as if their mother Earth
 Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
 The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,
 Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
 The next but swept a lone hill-side,
 Where heath and fern were waving wide:
 The sun's last glance was glinted back,
 From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
 The next, all unreflected, shone
 On bracken green, and cold grey stone.

- xi. Fitz-James look'd round—yet scarce believed
 The witness that his sight received;
 Such apparition well might seem
 Delusion of a dreadful dream.
 Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
 And to his look the Chief replied,
 "Fear nought—nay, that I need not say—
 But—doubt not aught from mine array.
 Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
 As far as Coilantogle ford:
 Nor would I call a clansman's brand
 For aid against one valiant hand,
 Though on our strife lay every vale
 Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
 So move we on;—I only meant

To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say, that now his blood
Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonour'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanish'd guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

- xii. The Chief in silence strode before,
And reach'd that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the Chieftain staid,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said:—
“Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand:
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword.”

- XIII. The Saxon paused:—" I ne'er delay'd,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay, more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:
Can nought but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—" No, Stranger, none!
And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead;
' Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.' "—
" Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
" The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate has solved her prophecy,
Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land."
- XIV. Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye—
" Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Nor yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
" I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown;

Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
 Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
 Of this small horn one feeble blast
 Would fearful odds against thee cast.
 But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
 We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.”—
 Then each at once his falchion drew,
 Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
 Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
 As what they ne'er might see again;
 Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
 In dubious strife they darkly closed.

- xv. Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
 That on the field his targe he threw,
 Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
 Had death so often dash'd aside;
 For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
 Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
 He practised every pass and ward,
 To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
 While less expert, though stronger far,
 The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
 Three times in closing strife they stood,
 And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
 No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
 The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
 Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
 And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;
 And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
 Against the winter shower is proof,
 The foe, invulnerable still,
 Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;
 Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
 Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
 And backward borne upon the lea,
 Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

- xvi. “ Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade! ”
 “ Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
 Let recreant yield, who fears to die.”
 —Like adder darting from his coil,
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
 Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
 Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
 And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—
 Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!

No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
 That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
 Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
 They tug, they strain! down, down they go,
 The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
 The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
 His knee was planted on his breast;
 His clotted locks he backward threw,
 Across his brow his hand he drew,
 From blood and mist to clear his sight,
 Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
 —But hate and fury ill supplied
 The stream of life's exhausted tide,
 And all too late the advantage came,
 To turn the odds of deadly game;
 For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,
 Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.
 Down came the blow! but in the heath
 The erring blade found bloodless sheath!
 The struggling foe may now unclasp
 The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
 Unwounded from the dreadful close,
 But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

- xvii. He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,
 Redeem'd, unhop'd, from desperate strife;
 Next on his foe his look he cast,
 Whose every gasp appear'd his last;
 In Roderick's gore he dipt the braid,—
 “Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
 Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
 The praise that Faith and Valour give.”
 With that he blew a bugle-note,
 Undid the collar from his throat,
 Unbonneted, and by the wave
 Sate down his brow and hands to lave.
 Then faint afar are heard the feet
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
 The sounds increase, and now are seen
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
 Two who bear lance, and two who lead;
 By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
 Each onward held his headlong course,
 And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
 With wonder view'd the bloody spot—
 —“Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
 You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
 And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
 Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,

We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune,
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

xviii. “Stand, Bayard, stand!”—the steed obey’d,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye and quivering ear
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreath’d his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turn’d on the horse his armed heel,
And stirr’d his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch’d, along the plain they go.
They dash’d that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie’s hill they flew;
Still at the gallop prick’d the Knight,
His merry-men follow’d as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the banner’d towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their courser’s sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig Forth!
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career look’d down.

xix. As up the flinty path they strain’d
Sudden his steed the leader rein’d;
A signal to his squire he flung,

Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
 “Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor array?
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain-side?
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?”—
 “No, by my word;—a burly groom
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A baron's train would nobly grace.”—
 “Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye?
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew;
 Like form in Scotland is not seen,
 Treads not such step on Scottish green.
 'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
 The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
 Away, away, to court, to show
 The near approach of dreaded foe:
 The King must stand upon his guard;
 Douglas and he must meet prepared.”
 Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
 They won the castle's postern gate.

- xx. The Douglas, who had bent his way
 From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey grey,
 Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,
 Held sad communion with himself:—
 “Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
 A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
 And fiery Roderick soon will feel
 The vengeance of the royal steel.
 I, only I, can ward their fate,—
 God grant the ransom come not late!
 The Abbess hath her promise given,
 My child shall be the bride of Heaven;—
 —Be pardon'd one repining tear!
 For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
 How excellent! but that is by,
 And now my business is—to die.
 —Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
 And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
 That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
 As on the noblest of the land
 Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
 The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
 Prepare—for Douglas seeks his doom!

—But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
 Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
 And see! upon the crowded street,
 In motley groups what masquers meet!
 Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
 And merry morrice-dancers come.
 I guess, by all this quaint array,
 The burghers hold their sports to-day.
 James will be there; he loves such show,
 Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
 And the tough wrestler foils his foe.
 As well as where, in proud career,
 The high-born tilter shivers spear.
 I'll follow to the Castle-park,
 And play my prize;—King James shall mark,
 If age has tamed these sinews stark,
 Whose force so oft, in happier days,
 His boyish wonder loved to praise."

- xxi. The Castle gates were open flung,
 The quivering drawbridge rock'd and rung,
 And echo'd loud the flinty street
 Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
 As slowly down the steep descent
 Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,
 While all along the crowded way
 Was jubilee and loud huzza.
 And ever James was bending low,
 To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
 Doffing his cap to city dame,
 Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
 And well the simperer might be vain,—
 He chose the fairest of the train.
 Gravely he greets each city sire,
 Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
 Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
 And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
 Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
 "Long live the Commons' King, King James!"
 Behind the King throng'd peer and knight,
 And noble dame and damsel bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay
 Of the steep street and crowded way.
 —But in the train you might discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
 There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,
 And the mean burgher's joys disdain'd;
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
 Were each from home a banish'd man,

There thought upon their own grey tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deem'd themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

xxii. Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout.
There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
His first shaft centered in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

xxiii. Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor call'd in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak; but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd;
Indignant then he turn'd him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,

And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-hair'd sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

xxiv. The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.
The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd
A purse well-fill'd with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong;
The old men mark'd, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And wink'd aside, and told each son,
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judg'd, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honour'd place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he, whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known!

xxv. The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side

Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
 The fleetest hound in all the North,—
 Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
 She left the royal hounds mid-way,
 And dashing on the antler'd prey,
 Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
 And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
 The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
 By strange intruder broken short,
 Came up, and with his leash unbound,
 In anger struck the noble hound.
 —The Douglas had endured, that morn,
 The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
 And last, and worst to spirit proud,
 Had borne the pity of the crowd;
 But Lufra had been fondly bred,
 To share his board, to watch his bed,
 And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
 In maiden glee with garlands deck;
 They were such playmates, that with name
 Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
 His stifled wrath is brimming high,
 In darken'd brow and flashing eye;
 As waves before the bark divide,
 The crowd gave way before his stride;
 Needs but a buffet and no more,
 The groom lies senseless in his gore.
 Such blow no other hand could deal,
 Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

- xxvi. Then clamour'd loud the royal train,
 And brandish'd swords and staves amain.
 But stern the Baron's warning—"Back!
 Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
 Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
 King James! the Douglas, doom'd of old,
 And vainly sought for near and far,
 A victim to atone the war,
 A willing victim, now attends,
 Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
 "Thus is my clemency repaid?
 Presumptuous Lord!" the monarch said;
 "Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
 Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
 The only man, in whom a foe
 My woman-mercy would not know:
 But shall a Monarch's presence brook
 Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
 What ho! the Captain of our Guard!

Give the offender fitting ward.—
 Break off the sports! ”—for tumult rose,
 And yeomen ’gan to bend their bows,—
 “ Break off the sports! ” he said, and frown’d,
 “ And bid our horsemen clear the ground.”

xxvii. Then uproar wild and misarray
 Marr’d the fair form of festal day.
 The horsemen prick’d among the crowd,
 Repell’d by threats and insult loud;
 To earth are borne the old and weak,
 The timorous fly, the women shriek;
 With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
 The hardier urge tumultuous war.
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep
 The royal spears in circle deep,
 And slowly scale the pathway steep;
 While on the rear in thunder pour
 The rabble with disorder’d roar.
 With grief the noble Douglas saw
 The Commons rise against the law,
 And to the leading soldier said,—
 “ Sir John of Hyndford! ’twas my blade
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
 For that good deed, permit me then
 A word with these misguided men.

xxviii. “ Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me,
 Ye break the bands of fealty.
 My life, my honour, and my cause,
 I tender free to Scotland’s laws.
 Are these so weak as must require
 The aid of your misguided ire?
 Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,
 My sense of public weal so low,
 That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
 Those cords of love I should unbind,
 Which knit my country and my kind?
 Oh no! Believe, in yonder tower
 It will not soothe my captive hour,
 To know those spears our foes should dread,
 For me in kindred gore are red;
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
 For me, that mother wails her son;
 For me, that widow’s mate expires;
 For me, that orphans weep their sires;
 That patriots mourn insulted laws,
 And curse the Douglas for the cause.

O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"

xxix. The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain,
With lifted hands and eyes, they pray'd
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Bless'd him who staid the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved:
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head.
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resign'd his honour'd charge.

xxx. The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
Strain'd for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hail'd the day
When first I broke the Douglas' sway;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy king!

xxxi. "But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar—
What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—

“ He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground:
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw'd Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summon'd his rebellious crew;
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand array'd.
 The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march'd, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought;
 But earnestly the Earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride.”—

xxxii. “ Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
 I should have earlier look'd to this:
 I lost it in this bustling day.
 —Retrace with speed thy former way;
 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
 The best of mine shall be thy meed.
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
 We do forbid the intended war:
 Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
 Was made our prisoner by a knight;
 And Douglas hath himself and cause
 Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
 The tidings of their leaders lost
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
 For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
 Bear Mar our message, Braco: fly!”—
 He turn'd his steed,—“ My liege, I hie,—
 Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
 I fear the broadswords will be drawn.”
 The turf the flying courser spurn'd,
 And to his towers the King return'd.

xxxiii. Ill with King James's mood that day,
 Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
 Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,
 And soon cut short the festal song.
 Nor less upon the sadden'd town
 The evening sunk in sorrow down.
 The burghers spoke of civil jar,
 Of rumour'd feuds and mountain war,
 Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
 All up in arms:—the Douglas too,
 They mourn'd him pent within the hold,

"Where stout Earl William was of old"—
 And there his word the speaker staid,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 Or pointed to his dagger blade.
 But jaded horsemen, from the west,
 At evening to the Castle press'd;
 And busy talkers said they bore
 Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
 At noon the deadly fray begun,
 And lasted till the set of sun.
 Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
 Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD-ROOM

- I. The sun, awakening, through the smoky air
 Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
 Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
 Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
 Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
 Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
 Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
 And warning student pale to leave his pen,
 And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
 Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!
 The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
 Through crowded hospital beholds its stream;
 The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,
 The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
 The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting
 dream;
 The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
 Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his
 feeble wail.

- II. At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
 With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
 While drums, with rolling note, foretell
 Relief to weary sentinel.
 Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
 The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
 And, struggling with the smoky air,
 Deadened the torches' yellow glare.
 In comfortless alliance shone

The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
 And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
 Faces deform'd with beard and scar,
 All haggard from the midnight watch,
 And fever'd with the stern debauch;
 For the oak table's massive board,
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
 And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,
 Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
 Some labour'd still their thirst to quench;
 Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
 O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
 While round them, or beside them flung,
 At every step their harness rung.

III. These drew not for their fields the sword,
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,
 Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
 Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
 Adventurers they, from far who roved,
 To live by battle which they loved.
 There the Italian's clouded face,
 The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
 The mountain-loving Switzer there
 More freely breathed in mountain-air;
 The Fleming there despised the soil,
 That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
 Their rolls show'd French and German name;
 And merry England's exiles came,
 To share, with ill conceal'd disdain,
 Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
 All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
 The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
 In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd;
 And now, by holytide and feast,
 From rules of discipline released.

IV. They held debate of bloody fray,
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
 Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
 Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
 Of wounded comrades groaning near,
 Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
 Bore token of the mountain sword,
 Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
 Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;

Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
 And savage oath by fury spoke!—
 At length up-started John of Brent,
 A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
 A stranger to respect or fear,
 In peace a chaser of the deer,
 In host a hardy mutineer,
 But still the boldest of the crew,
 When deed of danger was to do.
 He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
 And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,
 And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
 And, while a merry catch I troll,
 Let each the buxom chorus bear,
 Like brethren of the brand and spear."

SOLDIER'S SONG

- v. Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown
 bowl,
 That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-
 jack,
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
 Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
 Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black
 eye;
 Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother
 Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

- vi. The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
 A soldier to the portal went,—
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
 And,—beat for jubilee the drum!
 A maid and minstrel with him come."

Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,
 A harper with him, and in plaid
 All muffled close, a mountain maid,
 Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
 "What news?" they roar'd:—"I only know,
 From noon till eve we fought with foe,
 As wild and as untameable
 As the rude mountains where they dwell;
 On both sides store of blood is lost,
 Nor much success can either boast."—
 "But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
 As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
 Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
 Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
 Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
 The leader of a juggler band."—

VII. "No, comrade;—no such fortune mine.
 After the fight these sought our line,
 That aged harper and the girl,
 And, having audience of the Earl,
 Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
 And bring them hitherward with speed.
 Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
 For none shall do them shame or harm."—
 "Hear ye his boast?" cried John of Brent,
 Ever to strife and jangling bent;
 "Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
 And yet the jealous niggard grudge
 To pay the forester his fee?
 I'll have my share, howe'er it be,
 Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."
 Bertram his forward step withstood;
 And, burning in his vengeful mood,
 Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
 But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
 And dropp'd at once the tartan screen:—
 So, from his morning cloud, appears
 The sun of May, through summer tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed,
 As on descended angel gazed;
 Even hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII. Boldly she spoke,—“Soldiers, attend!
 My father was the soldier's friend;
 Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,

And with him in the battle bled.
 Not from the valiant, or the strong,
 Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."—
 Answer'd De Brent, most forward still
 In every feat or good or ill,—
 "I shame me of the part I play'd:
 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
 An outlaw I by forest laws,
 And merry Needwood knows the cause.
 Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,"—
 He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
 "Must bear such age, I think, as thou.—
 Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
 The Captain of our watch to hall:
 There lies my halberd on the floor;
 And he that steps my halberd o'er,
 To do the maid injurious part,
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart!—
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
 Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."

- ix. Their Captain came, a gallant young—
 (Of Tullibardine's house he sprung),
 Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
 Gay was his mien, his humour light,
 And, though by courtesy controll'd,
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
 The high-born maiden ill could brook
 The scanning of his curious look
 And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
 Young Lewis was a generous youth;
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
 Ill suited to the garb and scene,
 Might lightly bear construction strange,
 And give loose fancy scope to range.
 "Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
 On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
 Like errant damosel of yore?
 Does thy high quest a knight require,
 Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
 Her dark eye flash'd;—she paused and sigh'd,—
 "O what have I to do with pride!—
 Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
 A suppliant for a father's life,
 I crave an audience of the King.
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
 The royal pledge of grateful claims,
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

- x. The signet-ring young Lewis took,
 With deep respect and alter'd look;
 And said,—“ This ring our duties own;
 And pardon, if to worth unknown,
 In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
 Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
 The King shall know what suitor waits.
 Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
 Repose you till his waking hour;
 Female attendance shall obey
 Your hest, for service or array.
 Permit I marshall you the way.”
 But, ere she followed, with the grace
 And open bounty of her race,
 She bade her slender purse be shared
 Among the soldiers of the guard.
 The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
 But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
 On the reluctant maiden's hold
 Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold;—
 “ Forgive a haughty English heart,
 And O forget its ruder part!
 The vacant purse shall be my share,
 Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
 Where gayer crests may keep afar.”
 With thanks—'twas all she could—the maid
 His rugged courtesy repaid.
- xi. When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
 Allan made suit to John of Brent:—
 “ My lady safe, O let your grace
 Give me to see my master's face!
 His minstrel I,—to share his doom
 Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
 Tenth in descent, since first my sires
 Waked for his noble house their lyres,
 Nor one of all the race was known
 But prized its weal above their own.
 With the Chief's birth begins our care;
 Our harp must soothe the infant heir,
 Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
 His earliest feat of field or chase;
 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse—
 A doleful tribute!—o'er his hearse.
 Then let me share his captive lot;

It is my right—deny it not! ”—
 “ Little we reck,” said John of Brent,
 “ We Southern men, of long descent;
 Nor wot we how a name—a word—
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
 Yet kind my noble landlord’s part,—
 God bless the house of Beaudesert!
 And, but I loved to drive the deer,
 More than to guide the labouring steer,
 I had not dwelt an outcast here.
 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see.”

- XII. Then, from a rusted iron hook,
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led
 Through grated arch and passage dread.
 Portals they pass’d, where, deep within,
 Spoke prisoner’s moan, and fetters’ din;
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman’s sword,
 And many an hideous engine grim,
 For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
 By artist form’d, who deem’d it shame
 And sin to give their work a name.
 They halted at a low-brow’d porch,
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
 While bolt and chain he backward roll’d,
 And made the bar unhasp its hold.
 They enter’d:—’twas a prison-room
 Of stern security and gloom,
 Yet not a dungeon; for the day
 Through lofty gratings found its way,
 And rude and antique garniture
 Deck’d the sad walls and oaken floor;
 Such as the rugged days of old
 Deem’d fit for captive noble’s hold.
 “ Here,” said De Brent, “ thou mayst remain
 Till the Leech visit him again.
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
 To tend the noble prisoner well.”
 Retiring then, the bolt he drew,
 And the lock’s murmurs growl’d anew.
 Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
 A captive feebly raised his head;
 The wondering Minstrel look’d, and knew—
 Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
 For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
 They, erring, deem’d the Chief he sought.

- xiii. As the tall ship, whose lofty prone
 Shall never stem the billows more,
 Deserted by her gallant band,
 Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
 And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat;—
 O! how unlike her course at sea!
 Or his free step on hill and lea!—
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
 “What of thy lady?—of my clan?—
 My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all?
 Have they been ruin'd in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
 Yet speak,—speak boldly—do not fear.”—
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,
 Was choked with grief and terror too.)—
 “Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;—
 Some might—for they had lost their Chief.
 Who basely live?—who bravely died?”—
 “O, calm thee, Chief!” the Minstrel cried,
 “Ellen is safe;”—“For that, thank Heaven!”—
 “And hopes are for the Douglas given;—
 The Lady Margaret, too, is well;
 And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
 Has never harp of minstrel told,
 Of combat fought so true and bold.
 Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
 Though many a goodly bough is rent.”
- xiv. The Chieftain rear'd his form on high,
 And fever's fire was in his eye;
 But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
 Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
 —“Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,
 With measure bold, on festal day,
 In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
 Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
 That stirring air that peals on high,
 O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
 Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst,)
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
 Fling me the picture of the fight,
 When met my clan the Saxon might.
 I'll listen, till my fancy hears
 The clang of swords, the crash of spears!

These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
 For the fair field of fighting men,
 And my free spirit burst away,
 As if it soar'd from battle fray."
 The trembling Bard with awe obey'd,—
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
 But soon remembrance of the sight
 He witness'd from the mountain's height,
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awaken'd the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along;—
 As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE

- xv. "The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
 For, ere he parted, he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!
 There is no breeze upon the fern,
 Nor ripple on the lake,
 Upon her eery nods the erne,
 The deer has sought the brake;
 The small birds will not sing aloud,
 The springing trout lies still,
 So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
 That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
 Benledi's distant hill.
 Is it the thunder's solemn sound
 That mutters deep and dread,
 Or echoes from the groaning ground
 The warrior's measured tread?
 Is it the lightning's quivering glance
 That on the thicket streams,
 Or do they flash on spear and lance
 The sun's retiring beams?
 —I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
 I see the Moray's silver star,
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
 That up the lake comes winding far!
 To hero bound for battle strife,
 Or bard of martial lay,
 'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life
 One glance at their array!

xvi. " Their light-arm'd archers far and near
 Survey'd the tangled ground,
 Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
 A twilight forest frown'd,
 Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
 The stern battalia crown'd.
 No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
 Still were the pipe and drum;
 Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
 The sullen march was dumb.
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
 Or wave their flags abroad;
 Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
 That shadow'd o'er their road.
 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe,
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirr'd the roe;
 The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
 High-swelling, dark, and slow.
 The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
 A narrow and a broken plain,
 Before the Trosach's rugged jaws;
 And here the horse and spearmen pause,
 While, to explore the dangerous glen,
 Dive through the pass the archer-men.

xvii. " At once there rose so wild a yell
 Within that dark and narrow dell,
 As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
 Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell!
 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
 The archery appear;
 For life! for life! their plight they ply—
 And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
 And plaids and bonnets waving high,
 And broadswords flashing to the sky,
 Are maddening in the rear.
 Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
 Pursuers and pursued;
 Before that tide of flight and chase,
 How shall it keep its rooted place,
 The spearmen's twilight wood?—
 'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
 Bear back both friend and foe!'
 Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
 That serried grove of lances brown

At once lay levell'd low;
 And closely shouldering side to side,
 The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
 'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
 As their Tinchel¹ cows the game!
 They come as fleet as forest deer,
 We'll drive them back as tame.'—

- xviii. " Bearing before them, in their course,
 The relics of the archer force,
 Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
 Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
 Above the tide, each broadsword bright
 Was brandishing like beam of light,
 Each targe was dark below;
 And with the ocean's mighty swing,
 When heaving to the tempest's wing,
 They hurl'd them on the foe.
 I heard the lance's shivering crash,
 As when the whirlwind rends the ash,
 I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
 As if an hundred anvils rang!
 But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank
 Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,
 —' My banner-man, advance!
 I see,' he cried, ' their column shake.—
 Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
 Upon them with the lance! '—
 The horsemen dash'd among the rout,
 As deer break through the broom;
 Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
 They soon make lightsome room.
 Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
 Where, where was Roderick then!
 One blast upon his bugle-horn
 Were worth a thousand men!
 And reflux through the pass of fear
 The battle's tide was pour'd;
 Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,
 Vanish'd the mountain-sword.
 As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
 Receives her roaring linn,
 As the dark caverns of the deep
 Suck the wild whirlpool in,
 So did the deep and darksome pass
 Devour the battle's mingled mass:

¹ A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*.

None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

- xix. "Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within,
—Minstrel, away, the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosach's dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
Grey Benvenue I soon repass'd,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
 The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
 The lowering scowl of heaven
 An inky view of vivid blue
 To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain-glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosach's gorge,
Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged agen,
 But not in mingled tide;
The plaided warriors of the North
High on the mountain thunder forth
 And overhang its side;
While by the lake below appears
The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shatter'd band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

- xx. "Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxon stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
 And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'Tis there of yore the robber band
 Their booty wont to pile;—
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,

To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
 And loose a shallop from the shore.
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
 Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'
 Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
 On earth his casque and corslet rung,
 He plunged him in the wave:—
 All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
 And to their clamours Benvenue
 A mingled echo gave;
 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
 The helpless females scream for fear,
 And yells for rage the mountaineer.
 'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
 Pour'd down at once the lowering heaven;
 A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
 Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.
 Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
 For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,
 The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
 In vain—He nears the isle—and lo!
 His hand is on a shallop's bow.
 —Just then a flash of lightning came,
 It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
 I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame,
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,
 A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand:
 It darken'd,—but, amid the moan
 Of waves, I heard a dying groan;
 Another flash!—the spearman floats
 A weltering corse beside the boats,
 And the stern matron o'er him stood,
 Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

- XXI. “ ‘ Revenge! revenge!’ the Saxons cried,
 The Gaels’ exulting shout replied.
 Despite the elemental rage,
 Again they hurried to engage;
 But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
 Bloody with spurring came a knight,
 Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
 Waved ’twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
 Clarion and trumpet by his side
 Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
 While, in the Monarch’s name, afar
 An herald’s voice forbade the war,
 For Bothwell’s lord, and Roderick bold,
 Were both, he said, in captive hold.”

—But here the lay made sudden stand!—
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!—
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy:
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length, no more his deafen'd ear
The minstrel melody can hear;
His face grows sharp,—his hands are clench'd,
As if some pang his heart-strings wrench'd;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fix'd on vacancy;
Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!—
Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit pass'd:
But when he saw that life was fled,
He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

LAMENT

XXII. “ And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foemen's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade
For thee shall none a requiem say?
—For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

“ What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.—
O woe for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

“ Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prison'd eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,

Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honour'd Pine."—

xxiii. Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
Where play'd with many-colour'd gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten'd up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or, if she look'd, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawn'd the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claim'd with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.—
Those who such simple joys have known,
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

xxiv. "My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were, as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.
I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.

The lark was wont my matins ring,
 The sable rook my vespers sing;
 These towers, although a king's they be,
 Have not a hall of joy for me.
 No more at dawning morn I rise,
 And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
 Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
 And homeward wend with evening dew;
 A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
 That life is lost to love and me!"

xxv. The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
 The list'ner had not turn'd her head,
 It trickled still, the starting tear,
 When light a footstep struck her ear,
 And Snowdoun's graceful knight was near.
 She turn'd the hastier, lest again
 The prisoner should renew his strain.—
 "O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
 "How may an almost orphan maid
 Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so!
 To me no gratitude you owe.
 Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
 And bid thy noble father live;
 I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
 With Scotland's king thy suit to aid.
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride
 May lay his better mood aside.
 Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
 He holds his court at morning prime."
 With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
 As to a brother's arm she clung.
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
 Her faltering steps half led, half staid,
 Through gallery fair, and high arcade,
 Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
 A portal arch unfolded wide.

xxvi. Within 'twas brilliant all and light
 A thronging scene of figures bright;
 It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
 As when the setting sun has given
 Ten thousand hues to summer even,
 And from their tissue, fancy frames
 Aërial knights and fairy dames.
 Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
 A few faint steps she forward made,

Then slow her drooping head she raised,
 And fearful round the presence gazed;
 For him she sought, who own'd this state,
 The dreaded prince whose will was fate.
 She gazed on many a princely port,
 Might well have ruled a royal court;
 On many a splendid garb she gazed,
 Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,
 For all stood bare; and, in the room,
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
 To him each lady's look was lent;
 On him each courtier's eye was bent;
 Midst furs, and silks, and jewels sheen,
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
 The centre of the glittering ring.
 And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

- XXVII. As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
 Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
 And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
 No word her choking voice commands,—
 She show'd the ring, she clasp'd her hands.
 O! not a moment could he brook,
 The generous prince, that suppliant look!
 Gently he raised her; and, the while,
 Check'd with a glance the circle's smile;
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
 And bade her terrors be dismiss'd:—
 "Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
 The fealty of Scotland claims.
 To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
 He will redeem his signet ring.
 Ask nought for Douglas; yester even,
 His prince and he have much forgiven.
 Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
 We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
 Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
 Calmly we heard and judg'd his cause,
 Our council aided, and our laws.
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern,
 With stout De Vaux and Grey Glencairn;
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
 The friend and bulwark of our Throne.
 But, lovely infidel, how now?
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

- xxviii. Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye
On Nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepp'd between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'Tis under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
Then, in a tone apart and low,—
"Ah! little traitress! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!"—
Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"
- xxix. Full well the conscious maiden guess'd
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness, there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,
And more she deem'd the Monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
"Forbear thy suit:—the King of Kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings,
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand:—
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!—
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"

Blushing, she turn'd her from the King,
 And to the Douglas gave the ring,
 As if she wish'd her sire to speak
 The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek.—
 "Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
 And stubborn justice holds her course.—
 Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
 Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
 "For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
 From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
 Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
 Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
 And sought amid thy faithful clan,
 A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
 Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.—
 Fetters and warder for the Græme!"—
 His chain of gold the King unstrung,
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
 Then gently drew the glittering band,
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
 On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
 In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
 The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
 Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
 And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
 Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
 With distant echo from the fold and lea,
 And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.
 Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel harp!
 Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
 And little reck I of the censure sharp
 May idly cavil at an idle lay.
 Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
 Through secret woes the world has never known,
 When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
 And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.
 That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.
 Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
 Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
 'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
 'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
 Receding now, the dying numbers ring
 Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
 And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
 A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
 And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK¹

INTRODUCTION

- I. Lives there a strain, whose sounds of mounting fire
May rise distinguish'd o'er the din of war;
Or died it with yon Master of the Lyre,
Who sung beleaguer'd Ilion's evil star?
Such, WELLINGTON, might reach thee from afar,
Wafting its descant wide o'er Ocean's range;
Nor shouts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
All as it swell'd 'twixt each loud trumpet-change,
That clangs to Britain victory, to Portugal revenge!
- II. Yes! such a strain, with all o'er-pouring measure,
Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
Each voice of fear or triumph, woe or pleasure,
That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around;
The thundering cry of hosts with conquest crown'd,
The female shriek, the ruin'd peasant's moan,
The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
The foil'd oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
A Nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown.
- III. But we, weak minstrels of a laggard day,
Skill'd but to imitate an elder page,
Timid and raptureless, can we repay
The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
Thou givest our lyres a theme, that might engage
Those that could send thy name o'er sea and land,
While sea and land shall last; for Homer's rage
A theme; a theme for Milton's mighty hand—
How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band!
- IV. Ye mountains stern! within whose rugged breast
The friends of Scottish freedom found repose;
Ye torrents! whose hoarse sounds have soothed
their rest,
Returning from the field of vanquish'd foes;

¹ Dedication: To John Whitmore, Esq., and to the committee of subscribers for relief of the Portuguese sufferers in which he presides, this poem (The Vision of Don Roderick), composed for the benefit of the fund under their management, is respectfully inscribed by Walter Scott.

Say have ye lost each wild majestic close,
 That erst the choir of Bards or Druids flung;
 What time their hymn of victory arose,
 And Cattrath's glens with voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harp'd, and grey-hair'd Llywarch
 sung!

v. O! if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
 As sure your changeful gales seem oft to say,
 When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
 Like trumpet-jubilee, or harp's wild sway;
 If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
 Then lend the note to him has loved you long!
 Who pious gather'd each tradition grey,
 That floats your solitary wastes along,
 And with affection vain gave them new voice in song.

vi. For not till now, how oft soe'er the task
 Of truant verse hath lighten'd graver care,
 From Muse or Sylvan was he wont to ask,
 In phrase poetic, inspiration fair;
 Careless he gave his numbers to the air,
 They came unsought for, if applauses came;
 Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer;
 Let but his verse befit a hero's fame,
 Immortal be the verse!—forgot the poet's name.

vii. Hark, from yon misty cairn their answer tost:
 "Minstrel! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
 Capricious-swelling now, may soon be lost,
 Like the light flickering of a cottage fire;
 If to such task presumptuous thou aspire,
 Seek not from us the meed to warrior due:
 Age after age has gather'd son to sire,
 Since our grey cliffs the din of conflict knew,
 Or, pealing through our vales, victorious bugles blew.

viii. "Decay'd our old traditionary lore,
 Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
 By milk-maid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
 Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted
 spring;
 Save where their legends grey-hair'd shepherds sing,
 That now scarce win a listening ear but thine,
 Of feuds obscure, and Border ravaging,
 And rugged deeds recount in rugged line,
 Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne.

ix. "No! search romantic lands, where the near Sun
 Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,

Where the rude villager, his labour done,
 In verse spontaneous chants some favour'd name,
 Whether Olalia's charms his tribute claim,
 Her eye of diamond, and her locks of jet;
 Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,
 He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
 Old Albin's red claymore, green Erin's bayonet!

x. "Explore those regions, where the flinty crest
 Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
 Where in the proud Alhambra's ruin'd breast
 Barbaric monuments of pomp repose;
 Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
 Than the fierce Moor, float o'er Toledo's fane,
 From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
 An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
 The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain.

xi. "There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
 Still lightens in the sun-burnt native's eye;
 The stately port, slow step, and visage dark,
 Still mark enduring pride and constancy.
 And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
 Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,
 Iberia! oft thy crestless peasantry
 Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
 Have seen, yet dauntless stood—'gainst fortune
 fought and died.

xii. "And cherish'd still by that unchanging race,
 Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine;
 Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
 Legend and vision, prophecy and sign;
 Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
 With Gothic imagery of darker shade,
 Forming a model meet for minstrel line.
 Go, seek such theme!"—The Mountain Spirit
 said:
 With filial awe I heard—I heard, and I obey'd.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

i. Rearing their crests amid the cloudless skies,
 And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
 Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
 As from a trembling lake of silver white.
 Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
 Of the broad burial-ground outstretch'd below,

And nought disturbs the silence of the night;
 All sleeps in sullen shade, or silver glow,
 All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow.

- II. All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
 Or, distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp;
 Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride,
 To guard the limits of King Roderick's camp.
 For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
 Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
 Which glimmer'd back, against the moon's fair lamp,
 Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
 And standards proudly pitch'd, and warders arm'd
 between.
- III. But of their Monarch's person keeping ward,
 Since last the deep-mouth'd bell of vespers toll'd,
 The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
 The post beneath the proud Cathedral hold:
 A band unlike their Gothic sires of old,
 Who, for the cap of steel and iron mace,
 Bear slender darts, and casques bedeck'd with gold,
 While silver-studded belts their shoulders grace,
 Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place.
- IV. In the light language of an idle court,
 They murmur'd at their master's long delay,
 And held his lengthen'd orisons in sport:—
 "What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
 To wear in shrift and prayer the night away?
 And are his hours in such dull penance past,
 For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay?"—
 Then to the east their weary eyes they cast,
 And wish'd the lingering dawn would glimmer forth at
 last.
- V. But, far within, Toledo's Prelate lent
 An ear of fearful wonder to the King;
 The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
 So long that sad confession witnessing:
 For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
 Such as are lothly utter'd to the air,
 When Fear, Remorse, and Shame, the bosom wring,
 And Guilt his secret burden cannot bear,
 And Conscience seeks in speech a respite from Despair.
- VI. Full on the Prelate's face, and silver hair,
 The stream of failing light was feebly roll'd:
 But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
 Was shadow'd by his hand and mantle's fold.

While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
 Proud Alaric's descendant could not brook,
 That mortal man his bearing should behold,
 Or boast that he had seen, when Conscience
 shook,
 Fear tame a monarch's brow, Remorse a warrior's
 look.

VII. The old man's faded cheek wax'd yet more pale,
 As many a secret sad the King bewray'd;
 As sign and glance eked out the unfinish'd tale,
 When in the midst his faltering whisper staid.—
 "Thus royal Witiza was slain,"—he said;
 "Yet, holy Father, deem not it was I."
 Thus still Ambition strives her crimes to shade.—
 "Oh! rather deem 'twas stern necessity!
 Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die.

VIII. "And if Florinda's shrieks alarm'd the air,
 If she invoked her absent sire in vain,
 And on her knees implored that I would spare,
 Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash re-
 frain!—
 All is not as it seems—the female train
 Know by their bearing to disguise their
 mood:"—
 But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,
 Sent to the Monarch's cheek the burning blood—
 He stay'd his speech abrupt—and up the Prelate
 stood.

IX. "O harden'd offspring of an iron race!
 What of thy crimes, Don Roderick, shall I say?
 What alms, or prayers, or penance, can efface
 Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!
 For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,
 Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his
 boast?
 How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,
 Unless in mercy to yon Christian host,
 He spare the shepherd, lest the guiltless sheep be
 lost."

X. Then kindled the dark Tyrant in his mood,
 And to his brow return'd its dauntless gloom;
 "And welcome then," he cried, "be blood for
 blood,
 For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!

Yet will I know whence come they, or by whom.
 Show, for thou canst—give forth the fated key,
 And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room,
 Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
 His nation's future fates a Spanish King shall see.”—

xI. “Ill-fated Prince! recall the desperate word,
 Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
 Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford
 Never to former Monarch entrance-way;
 Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
 Save to a King, the last of all his line,
 What time his empire totters to decay,
 And treason digs, beneath, her fatal mine,
 And, high above, impends avenging wrath divine.”—

xII. “Prelate! a Monarch's fate brooks no delay;
 Lead on!”—The ponderous key the old man
 took,
 And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
 By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,
 Then on an ancient gateway bent his look;
 And, as the key the desperate King essay'd,
 Low mutter'd thunders the Cathedral shook,
 And twice he stopp'd, and twice new effort
 made,
 Till the huge bolts roll'd back, and the loud hinges
 bray'd.

xIII. Long, large, and lofty, was that vaulted hall;
 Roof, walls, and floor, were all of marble stone,
 Of polish'd marble, black as funeral pall,
 Carved o'er with signs and characters un-
 known.
 A paly light, as of the dawning, shone
 Through the sad bounds, but whence they
 could not spy;
 For window to the upper air was none;
 Yet, by that light, Don Roderick could descry
 Wonders that ne'er till then were seen by mortal eye.

xIV. Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
 Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place;
 Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
 Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.
 Moulded they seem'd for kings of giant race,
 That lived and sinn'd before the avenging flood;
 This grasp'd a scythe, that rested on a mace;

This spread his wings for flight, that ponder-
ing stood,
Each stubborn seem'd and stern, immutable of
mood.

xv. Fix'd was the right-hand Giant's brazen look
Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
As if its ebb he measured by a book,
Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand;
In which was wrote of many a fallen land,
Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven:
And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand—
"Lo, DESTINY and TIME! to whom by
Heaven
The guidance of the earth is for a season given."—

xvi. Even while they read, the sand-glass wastes
away;
And, as the last and lagging grains did creep,
That right-hand Giant 'gan his club upsway,
As one that startles from a heavy sleep.
Full on the upper wall the mace's sweep
At once descended with the force of thunder,
And hurtling down at once, in crumbled heap,
The marble boundary was rent asunder,
And gave to Roderick's view new sights of fear
and wonder.

xvii. For they might spy, beyond that mighty breach,
Realms as of Spain in vision'd prospect laid,
Castles and towers, in due proportion each,
As by some skilful artist's hand portray'd:
Here, crossed by many a wild Sierra's shade,
And boundless plains that tire the traveller's
eye;
There, rich with vineyard and with olive glade,
Or deep-embrown'd by forests huge and high,
Or wash'd by mighty streams, that slowly mur-
mur'd by.

xviii. And here, as erst upon the antique stage,
Pass'd forth the band of masquers trimly led,
In various forms, and various equipage,
While fitting strains the hearer's fancy fed;
So, to sad Roderick's eye in order spread,
Successive pageants fill'd that mystic scene,
Showing the fate of battles ere they bled,
And issue of events that had not been;
And, ever and anon, strange sounds were heard
between.

xix. First shrill'd an unrepeated female shriek!—
It seemed as if Don Roderick knew the call,
For the bold blood was blanching in his cheek.—
Then answer'd kettle-drum and atabal,
Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the ear appal,
The Tecbir war-cry, and the Lelie's yell,
Ring wildly dissonant along the hall.
Needs not to Roderick their dread import
tell—

“The Moor!” he cried, “the Moor!—ring out the
Tocsin bell!

xx. “They come! they come! I see the groaning
land
White with the turbans of each Arab horde;
Swart Zaarah joins her misbelieving bands,
Alla and Mahomet their battle-word,
The choice they yield, the Koran or the Sword—
See how the Christians rush to arms amain!—
In yonder shout the voice of conflict roar'd,
The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain—
Now, God and Saint Iago strike, for the good cause
of Spain!

xxi. “By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians
yield!
Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—
Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!
But never was she turn'd from battle-line:
Lo! where the recreant spurs o'er stock and
stone!
Curses pursue the slave, and wrath divine!
Rivers ingulph him!”—“Hush,” in shud-
dering tone,
The Prelate said;—“rash Prince, yon vision'd
form's thine own.”

xxii. Just then, a torrent cross'd the flier's course;
The dangerous ford the Kingly Likeness
tried;
But the deep eddies whelm'd both man and
horse,
Swept like benighted peasant down the tide;
And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,
As numerous as their native locust band;
Berber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,
With naked scimitars mete out the land,
And for the bondsmen base the freeborn natives
brand.

- xxiii. Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose
 The loveliest maidens of the Christian line;
 Then, menials, to their misbelieving foes,
 Castile's young nobles held forbidden wine;
 Then, too, the holy Cross, salvation's sign,
 By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
 And the deep aisles of the polluted shrine
 Echo'd, for holy hymn and organ-tone,
 The Santon's frantic dance, the Fakir's gibbering
 moan.
- xxiv. How fares Don Roderick?—E'en as one who
 spies
 Flames dart their glare o'er midnight's sable
 woof,
 And hears around his children's piercing cries,
 And sees the pale assistants stand aloof;
 While cruel Conscience brings him bitter proof,
 His folly or his crime have caused his grief;
 And while above him nods the crumbling roof,
 He curses earth and Heaven—himself in
 chief—
 Desperate of earthly aid, despairing Heaven's
 relief!
- xxv. That scythe-arm'd Giant turn'd his fatal glass
 And twilight on the landscape closed her
 wings;
 Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass,
 And in their stead rebeck or timbrel rings;
 And to the sound the bell-deck'd dancer springs,
 Bazaars resound as when their marts are met,
 In tourney light the Moor his jerrid flings,
 And on the land as evening seem'd to set,
 The Imaum's chant was heard from mosque or
 minaret.
- xxvi. So pass'd that pageant. Ere another came,
 The visionary scene was wrapp'd in smoke,
 Whose sulph'rous wreaths were cross'd by
 sheets of flame;
 With every flash a bolt explosive broke,
 Till Roderick deem'd the fiends had burst their
 yoke,
 And waved 'gainst heaven the infernal gon-
 falone!
 For War a new and dreadful language spoke,
 Never by ancient warrior heard or known;
 Lightning and smoke her breath, and thunder
 was her tone.

xxvii. From the dim landscape roll the clouds away—
 The Christians have regain'd their heritage;
 Before the Cross has waned the Crescent's ray
 And many a monastery decks the stage,
 And lofty church, and low-brow'd hermitage.
 The land obeys a Hermit and a Knight,—
 The Genii those of Spain for many an age;
 This clad in sackcloth, that in armour bright,
 And that was VALOUR named, this BIGOTRY was
 hight.

xxviii. VALOUR was harness'd like a Chief of old,
 Arm'd at all points, and prompt for knightly
 gest;
 His sword was temper'd in the Ebro cold,
 Morena's eagle plume adorn'd his crest,
 The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast.
 Fierce he stepp'd forward and flung down his
 gage;
 As if of mortal kind to brave the best.
 Him follow'd his Companion, dark and sage,
 As he, my Master, sung the dangerous Archimage.

xxix. Haughty of heart and brow the Warrior came,
 In look and language proud as proud might
 be,
 Vaunting his lordship, lineage, fights, and fame:
 Yet was that barefoot monk more proud than
 he:
 And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
 So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
 And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
 Till ermined Age and Youth in arms renown'd,
 Honouring his scourge and hair-cloth, meekly
 kiss'd the ground.

xxx. And thus it chanced that VALOUR, peerless
 knight,
 Who ne'er to King or Kaiser veil'd his
 crest,
 Victorious still in bull-feast or in fight,
 Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
 Stoop'd ever to that Anchoret's behest;
 Nor reason'd of the right, nor of the wrong,
 But at his bidding laid the lance in rest,
 And wrought fell deeds the troubled world
 along,
 For he was fierce as brave, and pitiless as strong.

xxxI. Oft his proud galleys sought some new-found world,
That latest sees the sun, or first the morn;
Still at that Wizard's feet their spoils he hurl'd,—
Ingots of ore from rich Potosi borne,
Crowns by Caciques, aigrettes by Omrahs worn,
Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and foul;
Idols of gold from heathen temples torn,
Bedabbled all with blood.—With grisly scowl
The Hermit mark'd the stains, and smiled beneath
his cowl.

xxxII. Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
Tribute to Heaven of gratitude and praise;
And at his word the choral hymns awake,
And many a hand the silver censer sways,
But with the incense-breath these censers raise,
Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire;
The groans of prison'd victims mar the lays,
And shrieks of agony confound the quire;
While, 'mid the mingled sounds, the darken'd
scenes expire.

xxxIII. Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
As once again revolved that measured sand;
Such sounds as when, for sylvan dance prepared,
Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band;
When for the light bolero ready stand
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met,
He conscious of his broider'd cap and band,
She of her netted locks and light corsette,
Each tiptoe perch'd to spring, and shake the
castanet.

xxxIV. And well such strains the opening scene became;
For VALOUR had relax'd his ardent look,
And at a lady's feet, like lion tame,
Lay stretch'd, full loth the weight of arms to brook;
And soften'd BIGOTRY, upon his book,
Patter'd a task of little good or ill:
But the blithe peasant plied his pruning-hook,
Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
And rung from village-green the merry seguidille.

- xxxv. Grey Royalty, grown impotent of toil,
Let the grave sceptre slip his lazy hold;
And, careless, saw his rule become the spoil
Of a loose Female and her minion bold.
But peace was on the cottage and the fold,
From court intrigue, from bickering faction
far;
Beneath the chestnut-tree Love's tale was told,
And to the tinkling of the light guitar,
Sweet stoop'd the western sun, sweet rose the
evening star.
- xxxvi. As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand,
When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
A while, perchance, bedeck'd with colours
sheen,
While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
Till darker folds obscured the blue serene,
And blotted heaven with one broad sable
cloud,
Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds
howl'd aloud:—
- xxxvii. Even so, upon that peaceful scene was pour'd,
Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign
band,
And HE, their Leader, wore in sheath his sword,
And offer'd peaceful front and open hand,
Veiling the perjured treachery he plann'd,
By friendship's zeal and honour's specious
guise,
Until he won the passes of the land;
Then burst were honour's oath, and friend-
ship's ties!
He clutch'd his vulture-grasp, and call'd fair
Spain his prize.
- xxxviii. An Iron Crown his anxious forehead bore;
And well such diadem his heart became.
Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
Or check'd his course for piety or shame;
Who, train'd a soldier, deem'd a soldier's fame
Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
Though neither truth nor honour deck'd his
name;
Who, placed by fortune on a Monarch's
throne,
Reck'd not of Monarch's faith, or Mercy's kingly
tone.

- xxxix. From a rude isle his ruder lineage came,
 The spark, that, from a suburb-hovel's
 hearth
 Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
 Hath not a meaner or more sordid birth.
 And for the soul that bade him waste the
 earth—
 The sable land-flood from some swamp
 obscure,
 That poisons the glad husband-field with
 dearth,
 And by destruction bids its fame endure,
 Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and im-
 pure.
- xl. Before that Leader strode a shadowy Form;
 Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor
 show'd,
 With which she beckon'd him through fight and
 storm,
 And all he crush'd that cross'd his desperate
 road,
 Nor thought, nor fear'd, nor look'd on what he
 trode.
 Realms could not glut his pride, blood could
 not slake,
 So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad—
 It was AMBITION bade her terrors wake,
 Nor deign'd she, as of yore, a milder form to take.
- xli. No longer now she spurn'd at mean revenge,
 Or staid her hand for conquer'd foeman's
 moan;
 As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
 By Cæsar's side she cross'd the Rubicon.
 Nor joy'd she to bestow the spoils she won,
 As when the banded powers of Greece were
 task'd
 To war beneath the Youth of Macedon:
 No seemly veil her modern minion ask'd,
 He saw her hideous face, and loved the fiend un-
 mask'd.
- xlII. That Prelate mark'd his march—On banners
 blazed
 With battles won in many a distant land,
 On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed;
 “And hopest thou then,” he said, “thy
 power shall stand?

O, thou hast builded on the shifting sand,
 And thou hast temper'd it with slaughter's
 flood;
 And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand,
 Gore-moisten'd trees shall perish in the bud,
 And by a bloody death, shall die the Man of
 Blood!"

XLIII. The ruthless Leader beckon'd from his train
 A wan fraternal Shade, and bade him kneel,
 And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
 While trumpets rang, and heralds cried,
 "Castile!"

Not that he loved him—No!—In no man's weal,
 Scarce in his own, e'er joy'd that sullen heart;
 Yet round that throne he bade his warriors
 wheel,
 That the poor Puppet might perform his part,
 And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start.

XLIV. But on the Natives of that Land misused,
 Not long the silence of amazement hung,
 Nor brook'd they long their friendly faith
 abused;

For, with a common shriek, the general
 tongue
 Exclaim'd, "To arms!"—and fast to arms
 they sprung.

And VALOUR woke, that Genius of the Land!
 Pleasure, and ease, and sloth, aside he flung,
 As burst th' awakening Nazarite his band,
 When 'gainst his treacherous foes he clench'd his
 dreadful hand.

XLV. That Mimic Monarch now cast anxious eye
 Upon the Satraps that begirt him round,
 Now doff'd his royal robe in act to fly,
 And from his brow the diadem unbound.
 So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle wound,
 From Tarick's walls to Bilboa's mountains
 blown,

These martial satellites hard labour found,
 To guard a while his substituted throne—
 Light recking of his cause, but battling for their
 own.

XLVI. From Alpuhara's peak that bugle rung,
 And it was echo'd from Corunna's wall;
 Stately Seville responsive war-shot flung,
 Grenada caught it in her Moorish hall;

Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
 Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
 Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
 And, foremost still where Valour's sons are
 met,
 First started to his gun each fiery Miquelet.

XLVII. But unappall'd and burning for the fight,
 The Invaders march, of victory secure;
 Skilful their force to sever or unite,
 And train'd alike to vanquish or endure.
 Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to ensure,
 Discord to breathe, and jealousy to sow,
 To quell by boasting, and by bribes to lure;
 While nought against them bring the un-
 practised foe,
 Save hearts for Freedom's cause, and hands for
 Freedom's blow.

XLVIII. Proudly they march—but, O! they march not
 forth
 By one hot field to crown a brief campaign,
 As when their Eagles, sweeping through the
 North,
 Destroy'd at every stoop an ancient reign!
 Far other fate had Heaven decreed for Spain;
 In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,
 New Patriot armies started from the slain,
 High blazed the war, and long, and far, and
 wide,
 And oft the God of Battles blest the righteous side.

XLIX. Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,
 Remain'd their savage waste. With blade
 and brand,
 By day the Invaders ravaged hill and dale,
 But, with the darkness, the Guerilla band
 Came like night's tempest, and avenged the land,
 And claim'd for blood the retribution due,
 Probed the hard heart, and lopp'd the mur-
 d'rous hand;
 And Dawn, when o'er the scene her beams
 she threw,
 Midst ruins they had made, the spoilers' corpses
 knew.

L. What minstrel verse may sing, or tongue may
 tell,
 Amid the vision'd strife from sea to sea,

How oft the Patriot banners rose or fell,
 Still honour'd in defeat as victory!
 For that sad pageant of events to be,
 Show'd every form of fight by field and flood;
 Slaughter and Ruin, shouting forth their glee,
 Beheld, while riding on the tempest scud,
 The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrench'd
 with blood!

LI. Then Zaragoza—blighted be the tongue
 That names thy name without the honour due!
 For never hath the harp of Minstrel rung,
 Of faith so felly proved, so firmly true!
 Mine, sap, and bomb, thy shatter'd ruins knew,
 Each art of war's extremity had room,
 Twice from thy half-sack'd streets the foe with-
 drew
 And when at length stern fate decreed thy doom,
 They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody
 tomb.

LII. Yet raise thy head, sad city! Though in chains,
 Enthral'd thou canst not be! Arise, and claim
 Reverence from every heart where Freedom reigns,
 For what thou worshipspest!—thy sainted dame,
 She of the Column, honour'd be her name,
 By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love!
 And like the sacred relics of the flame,
 That gave some martyr to the bless'd above,
 To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove!

LIII. Nor thine alone such wreck. Gerona fair!
 Faithful to death thy heroes shall be sung,
 Manning the towers while o'er their heads the air
 Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung;
 Now thicker dark'ning where the mine was sprung,
 Now briefly lighten'd by the cannon's flare,
 Now arch'd with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
 And redd'ning now with conflagration's glare,
 While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare.

LIV. While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
 While the earth shook, and darken'd was the sky
 And wide Destruction stunn'd the listening ear,
 Appall'd the heart, and stupefied the eye,—
 Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry,
 In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
 Whene'er her soul is up, and pulse beats high,
 Whether it hail the wine cup or the fight,
 And bid each arm be strong, or bid each heart be
 light.

- LV. Don Roderick turn'd him as the shout grew loud—
 A varied scene the changeful vision show'd,
 For, where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
 A gallant navy stemm'd the billows broad.
 From mast and stern St. George's symbol flow'd,
 Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear;
 Mottling the sea their landward barges row'd,
 And flash'd the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
 And the wild beach return'd the seaman's jovial
 cheer.
- LVI. It was a dread, yet spirit-stirring sight!
 The billows foam'd beneath a thousand oars,
 Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,
 Legions on legions bright'ning all the shores.
 Then banners rise, and cannon-signal roars,
 Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,
 Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-flourish pours,
 And patriot hopes awake, and doubts are dumb,
 For, bold in Freedom's cause, the bands of Ocean
 come!
- LVII. A various host they came—whose ranks display
 Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight,
 The deep battalion locks its firm array,
 And meditates his aim the marksman light;
 Far glance the light of sabres flashing bright,
 Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing
 mead,
 Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,
 Nor the fleet ordnance whirl'd by rapid steed,
 That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed.
- LVIII. A various host—from kindred realms they came,
 Brethren in arms, but rivals in renown—
 For yon fair bands shall merry England claim,
 And with their deeds of valour deck her crown.
 Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,
 And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
 Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,
 And the blunt speech that bursts without a
 pause,
 And freeborn thoughts, which league the Soldier with
 the Laws.
- LIX. And, O! loved warriors of the Minstrel's land!
 Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave!
 The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
 And harsher features, and a mien more grave;

But ne'er in battle-field throb'd heart so brave,
 As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid;
 And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,
 And level for the charge your arms are laid,
 Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset
 staid!

LX. Hark! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings,
 Mingling wild mirth with war's stern minstrelsy,
 His jest while each blithe comrade round him
 flings,

And moves to death with military glee:
 Boast, Erin, boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
 In kindness warm, and fierce in danger known,
 Rough nature's children, humorous as she:
 And He, yon Chieftain—strike the proudest tone
 Of thy bold harp, green Isle!—the Hero is thine own.

LXI. Now on the scene Vimeira should be shown,
 On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,
 And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
 And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze:—
 But shall fond fable mix with heroes' praise?
 Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs
 room?
 And dare her wild-flowers mingle with the bays,
 That claim a long eternity to bloom
 Around the warrior's crest, and o'er the warrior's
 tomb!

LXII. Or may I give adventurous Fancy scope,
 And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
 That hides futurity from anxious hope,
 Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
 And painting Europe rousing at the tale
 Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurl'd,
 While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
 And Fame, with clarion-blast and wings un-
 furl'd,
 To Freedom and Revenge awakes an injured World?

LXIII. O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
 Since Fate has mark'd futurity her own:
 Yet fate resigns to worth the glorious past,
 The deeds recorded, and the laurels won.
 Then, though the Vault of Destiny be gone,
 King, Prelate, all the phantasms of my brain,
 Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
 Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
 One note of pride and fire, a Patriot's parting strain!

CONCLUSION

- I. "Who shall command Estrella's mountain-tide
Back to the source, when tempest-chafed, to hie?
Who, when Gascogne's vex'd gulf is raging wide,
Shall hush it as a nurse her infant's cry?
His magic power let such vain boaster try,
And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
And Biscay's whirlwinds list his lullaby,
Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles' way,
And they shall heed his voice, and at his bidding stay.
- II. "Else ne'er to stoop, till high on Lisbon's towers
They close their wings, the symbol of our yoke,
And their own sea hath whelm'd yon red-cross
Powers!"
Thus, on the summit of Alverca's rock,
To Marshal, Duke, and Peer, Gaul's Leader spoke,
While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled like Eden in her summer dress;—
Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.
- III. And shall the boastful Chief maintain his word,
Though Heaven hath heard the wailings of the
land,
Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
Though Britons arm, and WELLINGTON com-
mand!
No! grim Busaco's iron ridge shall stand
An adamantine barrier to his force;
And from its base shall wheel his shatter'd band,
As from the unshaken rock the torrent hoarse
Bears off its broken waves, and seeks a devious course.
- IV. Yet not because Alcoba's mountain-hawk
Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
In numbers confident, yon Chief shall baulk,
His Lord's imperial thirst for spoil and blood:
For full in view the promised conquest stood
And Lisbon's matrons from their walls, might
sum
The myriads that had half the world subdued,
And hear the distant thunders of the drum,
That bids the bands of France to storm and havoc
come.
- V. Four moons have heard these thunders idly roll'd,
Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,

As famish'd wolves survey a guarded fold—
 But in the middle path a Lion lay!
 At length they move—but not to battle-fray,
 Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight;
 Beacons of infamy, they light the way
 Where cowardice and cruelty unite
 To damn with double shame their ignominious flight!

VI. O triumph for the Fiends of Lust and Wrath!
 Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
 What wanton horrors mark'd their wreckful path!
 The peasant butcher'd in his ruin'd cot,
 The hoary priest even at the altar shot,
 Childhood and age given o'er to sword and
 flame,
 Woman to infamy;—no crime forgot,
 By which inventive demons might proclaim
 Immortal hate to man, and scorn of God's great
 name!

VII. The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
 With horror paused to view the havoc done,
 Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,
 Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer grasp'd his gun.
 Nor with less zeal shall Britain's peaceful son
 Exult the debt of sympathy to pay;
 Riches nor poverty the tax shall shun,
 Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
 Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worth-
 less lay.

VIII. But thou—unfoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
 Minion of Fortune, now miscall'd in vain!
 Can vantage-ground no confidence create,
 Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's mountain-chain?
 Vain-glorious fugitive! yet turn again!
 Behold, where, named by some prophetic Seer,
 Flows Honour's Fountain, as foredoom'd the stain
 From thy dishonour'd name and arms to clear—
 Fallen Child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour
 here!

IX. Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid;
 Those chief that never heard the lion roar!
 Within whose souls lives not a trace portray'd,
 Of Talavera, or Mondego's shore!
 Marshal each band thou hast, and summon more;
 Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole;
 Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
 Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,
 And weary out his arm—thou canst not quell his soul.

- x. O vainly gleams with steel Agueda's shore,
Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain!
And what avails thee that, for CAMERON slain,
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given—
Vengeance and grief gave mountain-rage the rein,
And, at the bloody spear-point headlong driven,
Thy Despot's giant guards fled like the rack of
heaven.
- xi. Go, baffled boaster! teach thy haughty mood
To plead at thine imperious master's throne,
Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
Deceived his hopes, and frustrated thine own;
Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown,
By British skill and valour were outvied;
Last say, thy conqueror was WELLINGTON!
And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried—
God and our cause to friend, the venture we'll abide.
- xii. But you, ye heroes of that well-fought day,
How shall a bard, unknowing and unknown,
His meed to each victorious leader pay,
Or bind on every brow the laurels won?
Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave;
And he, perchance, the minstrel-note might own,
Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
'Mid yon far western isles that hear the Atlantic rave.
- xiii. Yes! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword,
To give each Chief and every field its fame:
Hark! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
And Red Barosa shouts for dauntless GRÆME!
O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
To bid the world re-echo to their fame!
For never, upon gory battle-ground,
With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver
victors crown'd!
- xiv. O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage
steel'd,
And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield,
And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,

And taught her sons forgotten arms to wield—
 Shiver'd my harp, and burst its every chord,
 If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD!

xv. Not on that bloody field of battle won,
 Though Gaul's proud legions roll'd like mist
 away,
 Was half his self-devoted valour shown,—
 He gaged but life on that illustrious day;
 But when he toil'd those squadrons to array,
 Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
 Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
 He braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
 And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame.

xvi. Nor be his praise o'erpast who strove to hide
 Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
 Whose wish Heaven for his country's weal denied;
 Danger and fate he sought, but glory found.
 From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets
 sound,
 The wanderer went; yet, Caledonia! still
 Thine was his thought in march and tented ground;
 He dream'd 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
 And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill.

xvii. O hero of a race renown'd of old,
 Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell,
 Since first distinguish'd in the onset bold,
 Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell!
 By Wallace' side it rung the Southron's knell,
 Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber, own'd its fame,
 Tummell's rude pass can of its terrors tell,
 But ne'er from prouder field arose the name,
 Than when wild Ronda learn'd the conquering shout
 of GRÆME!

xviii. But all too long, through seas unknown and dark,
 (With Spenser's parable I close my tale,)
 By shoal and rock hath steer'd my venturous bark,
 And landward now I drive before the gale.
 And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
 And nearer now I see the port expand,
 And now I gladly furl my weary sail,
 And as the prow light touches on the strand,
 I strike my red-cross flag and bind my skiff to land.

ROKEBY¹

The Scene of this Poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard Castle, and to other places in that vicinity.

The time occupied by the action is a space of five days, three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great Battle of Marston Moor, 3rd July, 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War, but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious Narrative now presented to the Public.

CANTO FIRST

- I. The Moon is in her summer glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud;
On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream,
She changes as a guilty dream,
When conscience, with remorse and fear,
Goads sleeping Fancy's wild career.
Her light seems now the blush of shame,
Seems now fierce anger's darker flame,
Shifting that shade, to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle round.

- II. Those towers, which in the changeful gleam
Throw murky shadows on the stream,

¹ Dedication: To John B. S. Morritt, Esq., this poem, the scene of which is laid in his beautiful demesne of Rokeby, is inscribed, in token of sincere friendship, by Walter Scott. (December 31, 1812.)

Those towers of Barnard hold a guest,
 The emotions of whose troubled breast,
 In wild and strange confusion driven,
 Rival the flitting rack of heaven.
 Ere sleep stern OSWALD'S senses tied,
 Oft had he changed his weary side,
 Composed his limbs, and vainly sought
 By effort strong to banish thought.
 Sleep came at length, but with a train
 Of feelings true and fancies vain,
 Mingling, in wild disorder cast,
 The expected future with the past.
 Conscience, anticipating time,
 Already rues the enacted crime,
 And calls her furies forth, to shake
 The sounding scourge and hissing snake;
 While her poor victim's outward throes
 Bear witness to his mental woes,
 And show what lesson may be read
 Beside a sinner's restless bed.

- III. Thus Oswald's labouring feelings trace
 Strange changes in his sleeping face,
 Rapid and ominous as these
 With which the moonbeams tinge the Tees.
 There might be seen of shame the blush,
 There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
 While the perturbed sleeper's hand
 Seem'd grasping dagger-knife, or brand.
 Relax'd that grasp, the heavy sigh,
 The tear in the half-opening eye,
 The pallid cheek and brow, confess'd
 That grief was busy in his breast;
 Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
 Impell'd the life-blood from the heart:
 Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
 Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead.
 That pang the painful slumber broke,
 And Oswald with a start awoke.

- IV. He woke, and fear'd again to close
 His eyelids in such dire repose;
 He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
 From hour to hour the castle-bell.
 Or listen to the owlet's cry,
 Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
 Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
 With which the warder cheats the time,
 And envying think, how, when the sun

Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couch'd on his straw, and fancy-free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

- v. Far town-ward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank,
Until it reach'd the castle bank.
Now nigh and plain the sound appears,
The warder's challenge now he hears,
Then clanking chains and levers tell,
That o'er the moat the drawbridge fell,
And, in the castle court below,
Voices are heard, and torches glow,
As marshalling the stranger's way,
Straight for the room where Oswald lay;
The cry was,—“ Tidings from the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes post.”
Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus express'd—
“ Bring food and wine, and trim the fire;
Admit the stranger, and retire.”

- vi. The stranger came with heavy stride,
The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff-coat, an ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.
Full slender answer deigned he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But mark'd, by a disdainful smile,
He saw and scorn'd the petty wile,
When Oswald changed the torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's face
Its partial lustre might be thrown,
To show his looks, yet hide his own.
His guest, the while, laid low aside
The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier;
Then from his brows the casque he drew,
And from the dank plume dash'd the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved his hands,
And spread them to the kindling brands,
And, turning to the genial board,
Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;

As free from ceremony's sway,
As famish'd wolf that tears his prey.

VII. With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,
Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,
Almost he seem'd their haste to rue,
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger, free
To question of his mystery.
Then did his silence long proclaim
A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII. Much in the stranger's mien appears,
To justify suspicious fears.
On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time,
Roughen'd the brow, the temples bared,
And sable hairs with silver shared,
Yet left—what age alone could tame—
The lip of pride, the eye of flame;
The full-drawn lip that upward curl'd,
The eye, that seem'd to scorn the world.
That lip had terror never blench'd;
Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop quench'd
The flash severe of swarthy glow,
That mock'd at pain, and knew not woe.
Inured to danger's direst form,
Tornado and earthquake, flood and storm,
Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or ball,
Knew all his shapes, and scorn'd them all.

IX. But yet, though BERTRAM's harden'd look,
Unmoved, could blood and danger brook,
Still worse than apathy had place
On his swart brow and callous face;
For evil passions, cherish'd long,
Had plough'd them with impressions strong.

All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
 Light folly, past with youth away,
 But rooted stood, in manhood's hour,
 The weeds of vice without their flower.
 And yet the soil in which they grew,
 Had it been tamed when life was new,
 Had depth and vigour to bring forth
 The hardier fruits of virtuous worth.
 Not that, e'en then, his heart had known
 The gentler feelings' kindly tone;
 But lavish waste had been refined
 To bounty in his chasten'd mind,
 And lust of gold, that waste to feed,
 Been lost in love of glory's meed,
 And, frantic then no more, his pride
 Had ta'en fair virtue for its guide.

- x. Even now, by conscience unrestrain'd,
 Clogg'd by gross vice, by slaughter stain'd,
 Still knew his daring soul to soar,
 And mastery o'er the mind he bore;
 For meaner guilt, or heart less hard,
 Quail'd beneath Bertram's bold regard.
 And this felt Oswald, while in vain
 He strove, by many a winding train,
 To lure his sullen guest to show,
 Unask'd, the news he long'd to know,
 While on far other subject hung
 His heart, than falter'd from his tongue.
 Yet nought for that his guest did deign
 To note or spare his secret pain,
 But still, in stern and stubborn sort,
 Return'd him answer dark and short,
 Or started from the theme, to range
 In loose digression wild and strange,
 And forced the embarrass'd host to buy,
 By query close, direct reply.
- xi. A while he glozed upon the cause
 Of Commons, Covenant, and Laws,
 And Church Reform'd—but felt rebuke
 Beneath grim Bertram's sneering look,
 Then stammer'd—"Has a field been fought?
 Has Bertram news of battle brought?
 For sure a soldier, famed so far
 In foreign fields for feats of war,
 On eve of fight ne'er left the host,
 Until the field were won and lost."—
 "Here, in your towers by circling Tees,

You, Oswald Wycliffe, rest at ease;
 Why deem it strange that others come
 To share such safe and easy home,
 From fields where danger, death, and toil,
 Are the reward of civil broil? "—
 "Nay, mock not, friend! since well we know
 The near advances of the foe,
 To mar our northern army's work,
 Encamp'd before beleaguer'd York;
 Thy horse with valiant Fairfax lay,
 And must have fought—how went the day? "—

XII. "Wouldst hear the tale?—On Marston heath
 Met, front to front, the ranks of death;
 Flourish'd the trumpets fierce, and now
 Fired was each eye, and flush'd each brow;
 On either side loud clamours ring,
 'God and the Cause!'—'God and the King!'
 Right English all, they rush'd to blows,
 With nought to win, and all to lose.
 I could have laugh'd—but lack'd the time—
 To see, in phrenesy sublime,
 How the fierce zealots fought and bled,
 For king or state, as humour led;
 Some for a dream of public good,
 Some for church-tippet, gown and hood,
 Draining their veins, in death to claim
 A patriot's or a martyr's name.—
 Led Bertram Risingham the hearts,
 That counter'd there on adverse parts,
 No superstitious fool had I
 Sought El Dorados in the sky!
 Chili had heard me through her states,
 And Lima oped her silver gates,
 Rich Mexico I had march'd through,
 And sack'd the splendours of Peru,
 Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
 And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's fame."—
 "Still from the purpose wilt thou stray!
 Good gentle friend, how went the day? "—

XIII. "Good am I deem'd at trumpet-sound,
 And good where goblets dance the round,
 Though gentle ne'er was join'd, till now,
 With rugged Bertram's breast and brow.—
 But I resume. The battle's rage
 Was like the strife which currents wage,
 Where Orinoco, in his pride,
 Rolls to the main no tribute tide,

But 'gainst broad ocean urges far
A rival sea of roaring war;
While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
The billows fling their foam to heaven,
And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
Where rolls the river, where the main.
Even thus upon the bloody field,
The eddying tides of conflict wheel'd
Ambiguous, till that heart of flame,
Hot Rupert, on our squadrons came,
Hurling against our spears a line
Of gallants, fiery as their wine;
Then ours, though stubborn in their zeal,
In zeal's despite began to reel.
What wouldst thou more?—in tumult tost,
Our leaders fell, our ranks were lost.
A thousand men, who drew the sword
For both the Houses and the Word,
Preach'd forth from hamlet, grange, and down,
To curb the crosier and the crown,
Now, stark and stiff, lie stretch'd in gore,
And ne'er shall rail at mitre more.—
Thus fared it, when I left the fight,
With the good Cause and Commons' right.”—

- xiv. “Disastrous news!” dark Wycliffe said;
Assumed despondence bent his head.
While troubled joy was in his eye,
The well-feign'd sorrow to belie.—
“Disastrous news!—when needed most,
Told ye not that your chiefs were lost?
Complete the woful tale, and say,
Who fell upon that fatal day;
What leaders of repute and name
Bought by their death a deathless fame.
If such my direst foeman's doom,
My tears shall dew his honour'd tomb.—
No answer?—Friend, of all our host,
Thou know'st whom I should hate the most,
Whom thou too, once, wert wont to hate,
Yet leavest me doubtful of his fate.”—
With look unmoved,—“Of friend or foe,
Aught,” answer'd Bertram, “would'st thou know
Demand in simple terms and plain,
A soldier's answer shalt thou gain;—
For question dark, or riddle high,
I have nor judgment nor reply.”

- xv. The wrath his art and fear suppress'd,
Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's breast;

And brave, from man so meanly born,
 Roused his hereditary scorn.
 "Wretch! hast thou paid thy bloody debt?
 PHILIP OF MORTHAM, lives he yet?
 False to thy patron or thine oath,
 Trait'rous or perjured, one or both.
 Slave! hast thou kept thy promise plight,
 To slay thy leader in the fight?"—
 Then from his seat the soldier sprung,
 And Wycliffe's hand he strongly wrung;
 His grasp, as hard as glove of mail,
 Forced the red blood-drop from the nail—
 "A health!" he cried; and, ere he quaff'd,
 Flung from him Wycliffe's hand, and laugh'd:
 —"Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speaks thy heart!
 Now play'st thou well thy genuine part!
 Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
 Like me to roam a bucanier.
 What reck'st thou of the Cause divine,
 If Mortham's wealth and lands be thine?
 What carest thou for beleaguer'd York,
 If this good hand have done its work?
 Or what, though Fairfax and his best
 Are reddening Marston's swarthy breast,
 If Philip Mortham with them lie,
 Lending his life-blood to the dye?—
 Sit, then! and as 'mid comrades free
 Carousing after victory,—
 When tales are told of blood and fear,
 That boys and women shrink to hear,
 From point to point I frankly tell
 The deed of death as it befell.

- xvi. "When purposed vengeance I forego,
 Term me a wretch, nor deem me foe;
 And when an insult I forgive,
 Then brand me as a slave, and live!—
 Philip of Mortham is with those
 Whom Bertram Risingham calls foes;
 Or whom more sure revenge attends,
 If number'd with ungrateful friends.
 As was his wont, ere battle glow'd,
 Along the marshall'd ranks he rode,
 And wore his vizor up the while.
 I saw his melancholy smile,
 When, full opposed in front, he knew
 Where ROKEBY's kindred banner flew.
 'And thus,' he said, 'will friends divide!'—
 I heard, and thought how, side by side,

We two had turn'd the battle's tide,
 In many a well-debated field,
 Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
 I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
 Where death bestrides the evening gale,
 How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
 And fenceless faced the deadly dew;
 I thought on Quariana's cliff,
 Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
 Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
 Exhausted Mortham to the shore;
 And when his side an arrow found,
 I suck'd the Indian's venom'd wound.
 These thoughts like torrents rush'd along,
 To sweep away my purpose strong.

- xvii. "Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent;
 Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent.
 When Mortham bade me, as of yore,
 Be near him in the battle's roar,
 I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
 I scarcely heard the trumpets blow;
 Lost was the war in inward strife,
 Debating Mortham's death or life.
 'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come,
 As partner of his wealth and home,
 Years of piratic wandering o'er,
 With him I sought our native shore.
 But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
 From the bold heart with whom he ranged;
 Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
 Sadden'd and dimm'd descending years;
 The wily priests their victim sought,
 And damn'd each free-born deed and thought.
 Then must I seek another home,
 My licence shook his sober dome;
 If gold he gave, in one wild day
 I revell'd thrice the sum away.
 An idle outcast then I stray'd,
 Unfit for tillage or for trade.
 Deem'd, like the steel of rusted lance,
 Useless and dangerous at once.
 The women fear'd my hardy look,
 At my approach the peaceful shook;
 The merchant saw my glance of flame,
 And lock'd his hoards when Bertram came;
 Each child of coward peace kept far
 From the neglected son of war.

- xviii. " But civil discord gave the call,
And made my trade the trade of all.
By Mortham urged, I came again
His vassals to the fight to train.
What guerdon waited on my care?
I could not cant of creed or prayer;
Sour fanatics each trust obtain'd,
And I, dishonour'd and disdain'd,
Gain'd but the high and happy lot,
In these poor arms to front the shot!—
All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell;
Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well.
'Tis honour bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's fate.
- xix. " Thoughts, from the tongue that slowly part,
Glance quick as lightning through the heart. .
As my spur press'd my courser's side,
Philip of Mortham's cause was tried,
And, ere the charging squadrons mix'd,
His plea was cast, his doom was fix'd.
I watch'd him through the doubtful fray,
That changed as March's moody day,
Till, like a stream that bursts its bank,
Fierce Rupert thunder'd on our flank.
'Twas then, midst tumult, smoke, and strife,
Where each man fought for death or life,
'Twas then I fired my petronel,
And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.
One dying look he upward cast,
Of wrath and anguish—'twas his last.
Think not that there I stopp'd, to view
What of the battle should ensue;
But ere I clear'd that bloody press,
Our northern horse ran masterless;
Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.
Yet when I reach'd the banks of Swale,
Had rumour learn'd another tale;
With his barb'd horse, fresh tidings say,
Stout Cromwell has redeem'd the day:
But whether false the news, or true,
Oswald, I reck as light as you."
- xx. Not then by Wycliffe might be shown,
How his pride startled at the tone

In which his complice, fierce and free,
 Asserted guilt's equality.
 In smoothest terms his speech he wove,
 Of endless friendship, faith, and love;
 Promised and vow'd in courteous sort,
 But Bertram broke professions short.
 "Wycliffe, be sure not here I stay,
 No, scarcely till the rising day;
 Warn'd by the legends of my youth,
 I trust not an associate's truth.
 Do not my native dales prolong
 Of Percy Rede the tragic song.
 Train'd forward to his bloody fall,
 By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?
 Oft, by the Pringle's haunted side,
 The shepherd sees his spectre glide.
 And near the spot that gave me name,
 The moated mound of Risingham,
 Where Reed upon her margin sees
 Sweet Woodburne's cottages and trees,
 Some ancient sculptors' art has shown
 An outlaw's image on the stone;
 Unmatch'd in strength, a giant he,
 With quiver'd back, and kirtled knee.
 Ask how he died, that hunter bold,
 The tameless monarch of the wold,
 And age and infancy can tell,
 By brother's treachery he fell.
 Thus warn'd by legends of my youth,
 I trust to no associate's truth.

- xxi. "When last we reason'd of this deed,
 Nought, I bethink me, was agreed,
 Or by what rule, or when, or where,
 The wealth of Mortham we should share;
 Then list, while I the portion name,
 Our differing laws give each to claim.
 Thou, vassal sworn to England's throne,
 Her rules of heritage must own;
 They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
 Thy kinsman's lands and livings fair,
 And these I yield:—do thou revere
 The statutes of the Bucanier.
 Friend to the sea, and foeman sworn
 To all that on her waves are borne,
 When falls a mate in battle broil,
 His comrade heirs his portion'd spoil;
 When dies in fight a daring foe,
 He claims his wealth who struck the blow;

And either rule to me assigns
 Those spoils of Indian seas and mines,
 Hoarded in Mortham's caverns dark;
 Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
 Chalice and plate from churches borne,
 And gems from shrieking beauty torn,
 Each string of pearl, each silver bar,
 And all the wealth of western war.
 I go to search, where, dark and deep,
 Those Trans-atlantic treasures sleep.
 Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
 The heir will scarce find entrance free;
 And then farewell. I haste to try
 Each varied pleasure wealth can buy;
 When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
 Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword."

xxii. An undecided answer hung
 On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
 Despite his craft, he heard with awe
 This ruffian stabber fix the law;
 While his own troubled passions veer
 Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear:—
 Joy'd at the soul that Bertram flies,
 He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
 Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
 And fear'd to wend with him alone.
 At length, that middle course to steer,
 To cowardice and craft so dear,
 "His charge," he said, "would ill allow
 His absence from the fortress now;
 WILFRID on Bertram should attend,
 His son should journey with his friend."

xxiii. Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
 And wreathed to savage smile his frown.
 "Wilfrid, or thou—'tis one to me,
 Whichever bears the golden key.
 Yet think not but I mark, and smile
 To mark, thy poor and selfish wile!
 If injury from me you fear,
 What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here?
 I've sprung from walls more high than these,
 I've swam through deeper streams than Tees.
 Might I not stab thee, ere one yell
 Could rouse the distant sentinel?
 Start not—it is not my design,
 But, if it were, weak fence were thine;
 And, trust me, that, in time of need,

This hand hath done more desperate deed.
Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son;
Time calls, and I must needs be gone."

- xxiv. Nought of his sire's ungenerous part
Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart;
A heart too soft from early life
To hold with fortune needful strife.
His sire, while yet a hardier race
Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,
On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,
For feeble heart and forceless hand;
But a fond mother's care and joy
Were centred in her sickly boy.
No touch of childhood's frolic mood
Show'd the elastic spring of blood;
Hour after hour he loved to pore
On Shakspeare's rich and varied lore,
But turn'd from martial scenes and light,
From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,
To ponder Jaques' moral strain,
And muse with Hamlet, wise in vain;
And weep himself to soft repose
O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.
- xxv. In youth he sought not pleasures found
By youth in horse, and hawk, and hound,
But loved the quiet joys that wake
By lonely stream and silent lake;
In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff and copse and sky;
To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
Or lone Pendragon's mound to seek.
Such was his wont; and there his dream
Soar'd on some wild fantastic theme,
Of faithful love, or ceaseless spring,
Till Contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sustain,
And sad he sunk to earth again.
- xxvi. He loved—as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stanmore's lonely dell;
For his was minstrel's skill, he caught
The art unteachable, untaught;
He loved—his soul did nature frame
For love, and fancy nursed the flame;
Vainly he loved—for seldom swain
Of such soft mould is loved again;
Silent he loved—in every gaze

Was passion, friendship in his phrase.
So mused his life away—till died
His brethren all, their father's pride.
Wilfrid is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,
And destined, darkling, to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue.

xxvii. Wilfrid must love and woo the bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
To love her was an easy hest,
The secret empress of his breast;
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask.
Yet all Matilda could, she gave
In pity to her gentle slave;
Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,
And praise, the poet's best reward!
She read the tales his taste approved,
And sung the lays he framed or loved;
Yet, loth to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friendship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles again.

xxviii. So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the Tees,
The wo-foreboding peasant sees;
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion bold;
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords divide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The Knight of Rokeby led his ranks,
To aid the valiant northern Earls,
Who drew the sword for royal Charles.
Mortham, by marriage near allied,—
His sister had been Rokeby's bride,
Though long before the civil fray,
In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And march'd at Fairfax's command;
While Wycliffe, bound by many a train
Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody field,
Made Barnard's battlements his shield,

Secured them with his Lunedale powers,
And for the Commons held the towers.

xxix. The lovely heir of Rokeby's Knight
 Waits in his halls the event of fight;
 For England's war revered the claim
 Of every unprotected name,
 And spared, amid its fiercest rage,
 Childhood and womanhood and age.
 But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
 Must the dear privilege forego,
 By Greta's side, in evening grey,
 To steal upon Matilda's way,
 Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
 For careless step and vacant eye;
 Calming each anxious look and glance,
 To give the meeting all to chance,
 Or framing, as a fair excuse,
 The book, the pencil, or the muse:
 Something to give, to sing, to say,
 Some modern tale, some ancient lay.
 Then, while the long'd-for minutes last,—
 Ah! minutes quickly over-past!—
 Recording each expression free,
 Of kind or careless courtesy,
 Each friendly look, each softer tone,
 As food for fancy when alone.
 All this is o'er—but still, unseen,
 Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,
 To watch Matilda's wonted round,
 While springs his heart at every sound.
 She comes!—'tis but a passing sight,
 Yet serves to cheat his weary night;
 She comes not—He will wait the hour,
 When her lamp lightens in the tower;
 'Tis something yet, if, as she past,
 Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
 "What is my life, my hope?" he said;
 "Alas! a transitory shade."

xxx. Thus wore his life, though reason strove
 For mastery in vain with love,
 Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
 Of present woe and ills to come,
 While still he turn'd impatient ear
 From Truth's intrusive voice severe.
 Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
 In all but this, unmoved he view'd
 Each outward change of ill and good:

But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
 Was Fancy's spoil'd and wayward child;
 In her bright car she bade him ride,
 With one fair form to grace his side,
 Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
 Flung her high spells around his seat,
 Bathed in her dews his languid head,
 Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
 For him her opiates gave to flow,
 Which he who tastes can ne'er forego,
 And placed him in her circle, free
 From every stern reality,
 Till, to the Visionary, seem
 Her day-dreams truth, and truth a dream.

xxxI. Woe to the youth whom fancy gains,
 Winning from Reason's hand the reins,
 Pity and woe! for such a mind
 Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
 And woe to those who train such youth,
 And spare to press the rights of truth,
 The mind to strengthen and anneal,
 While on the stithy glows the steel!
 O teach him, while your lessons last,
 To judge the present by the past;
 Remind him of each wish pursued,
 How rich it glow'd with promised good;
 Remind him of each wish enjoy'd,
 How soon his hopes possession cloy'd!
 Tell him, we play unequal game,
 Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's aim;
 And, ere he strip him for her race,
 Show the conditions of the chase.
 Two sisters by the goal are set,
 Cold Disappointment and Regret;
 One disenchant the winner's eyes,
 And strips of all its worth the prize.
 While one augments its gaudy show,
 More to enhance the loser's woe.
 The victor sees his fairy gold,
 Transform'd, when won, to drossy mold,
 But still the vanquish'd mourns his loss,
 And rues, as gold, that glittering dross.

xxxII. More wouldst thou know—yon tower survey,
 Yon couch unpress'd since parting day,
 Yon untrimm'd lamp, whose yellow gleam
 Is mingling with the cold moonbeam,
 And yon thin form!—the hectic red

On his pale cheek unequal spread;
The head reclined, the loosen'd hair,
The limbs relax'd, the mournful air.—
See, he looks up;—a woful smile
Lightens his wo-worn cheek a while,—
'Tis fancy wakes some idle thought,
To gild the ruin she has wrought;
For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
And soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
She drinks his life-blood from the vein.
Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
Vain hope! to see the sun arise.
The moon with clouds is still o'ercast,
Still howls by fits the stormy blast;
Another hour must wear away,
Ere the East kindle into day,
And hark! to waste that weary hour,
He tries the minstrel's magic power.

SONG

To the Moon

XXXIII. Hail to thy cold and clouded beam,
Pale pilgrim of the troubled sky!
Hail, though the mists that o'er thee stream
Lend to thy brow their sullen dye!
How should thy pure and peaceful eye
Untroubled view our scenes below,
Or how a tearless beam supply
To light a world of war and woe!

Fair Queen! I will not blame thee now,
As once by Greta's fairy side;
Each little cloud that dimm'd thy brow
Did then an angel's beauty hide.
And of the shades I then could chide,
Still are the thoughts to memory dear,
For, while a softer strain I tried,
They hid my blush, and calm'd my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
Was form'd to light some lonely dell,
By two fond lovers only seen,
Reflected from the crystal well,
Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
Or quivering on the lattice bright,
Or glancing on their couch, to tell
How swiftly wanes the summer night!

- xxxiv. He starts—a step at this lone hour!
 A voice!—his father seeks the tower,
 With haggard look and troubled sense,
 Fresh from his dreadful conference.
 “Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep address’d?
 Thou hast no cares to chase thy rest.
 Mortham has fall’n on Marston-moor;
 Bertram brings warrant to secure
 His treasures, bought by spoil and blood,
 For the State’s use and public good.
 The menials will thy voice obey;
 Let his commission have its way,
 In every point, in every word.”—
 Then, in a whisper,—“Take thy sword!
 Bertram is—what I must not tell.
 I hear his hasty step—farewell!”

CANTO SECOND

- i. Far in the chambers of the west,
 The gale had sigh’d itself to rest;
 The moon was cloudless now and clear,
 But pale, and soon to disappear.
 The thin grey clouds wax dimly light
 On Brusleton and Houghton height;
 And the rich dale, that eastward lay,
 Waited the wakening touch of day,
 To give its woods and cultured plain,
 And towers and spires, to light again.
 But, westward, Stanmore’s shapeless swell,
 And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-fell,
 And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
 And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;
 While, as a livelier twilight falls,
 Emerge proud Barnard’s banner’d walls.
 High-crown’d he sits, in dawning pale,
 The sovereign of the lovely vale.
- ii. What prospects, from his watch-tower high,
 Gleam gradual on the warder’s eye!—
 Far sweeping to the east, he sees
 Down his deep woods the course of Tees,
 And tracks his wanderings by the steam
 Of summer vapours from the stream;
 And ere he paced his destined hour
 By Brackenbury’s dungeon-tower,
 These silver mists shall melt away,

And dew the woods with glittering spray.
Then in broad lustre shall be shown
That mighty trench of living stone,
And each huge trunk that, from the side,
Reclines him o'er the darksome tide,
Where Tees, full many a fathom low,
Wears with his rage no common foe;
For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed here,
Nor clay-mound, checks his fierce career,
Condemn'd to mine a channell'd way,
O'er solid sheets of marble grey.

- III. Nor Tees alone, in dawning bright,
Shall rush upon the ravish'd sight;
But many a tributary stream
Each from its own dark dell shall gleam:
Staindrop, who, from her silvan bowers,
Salutes proud Raby's battled towers;
The rural brook of Egliston,
And Balder, named from Odin's son;
And Greta, to whose banks ere long
We lead the lovers of the song;
And silver Lune, from Stanmore wild,
And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring child,
And last and least, but loveliest still,
Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
Who in that dim-wood glen hath stray'd,
Yet long'd for Roslin's magic glade?
Who, wandering there, hath sought to change
Even for that vale so stern and strange,
Where Cartland's Crag, fantastic rent,
Through her green copse like spires are sent?
Yet, Albin, yet the praise be thine,
Thy scenes and story to combine!
Thou bid'st him, who by Roslin strays,
List to the deeds of other days;
'Mid Cartland's Crag thou show'st the cave,
The refuge of thy champion brave;
Giving each rock its storied tale,
Pouring a lay for every dale,
Knitting, as with a moral band,
Thy native legends with thy land,
To lend each scene the interest high
Which genius beams from Beauty's eye.

- IV. Bertram awaited not the sight
Which sun-rise shows from Barnard's height,
But from the towers, preventing day,
With Wilfrid took his early way,

While misty dawn, and moonbeam pale,
 Still mingled in the silent dale.
 By Barnard's bridge of stately stone,
 The southern bank of Tees they won;
 Their winding path then eastward cast,
 And Egliston's grey ruins pass'd;
 Each on his own deep visions bent,
 Silent and sad they onward went.
 Well may you think that Bertram's mood,
 To Wilfrid's savage seem'd and rude;
 Well may you think bold Risingham
 Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and tame;
 And small the intercourse, I ween,
 Such uncongenial souls between.

- v. Stern Bertram shunn'd the nearer way,
 Through Rokeby's park and chase that lay,
 And, skirting high the valley's ridge,
 They cross'd by Greta's ancient bridge,
 Descending where her waters wind
 Free for a space and unconfined,
 As, 'scaped from Brignall's dark-wood glen,
 She seeks wild Mortham's deeper den.
 There, as his eye glanced o'er the mound,
 Raised by that Legion long renown'd,
 Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
 Of pious, faithful, conquering fame.
 "Stern sons of war!" sad Wilfrid sigh'd,
 "Behold the boast of Roman pride!
 What now of all your toils are known?
 A grassy trench, a broken stone!"—
 This to himself; for moral strain
 To Bertram were address'd in vain.

- vi. Of different mood, a deeper sigh
 Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets high
 Were northward in the dawning seen
 To rear them o'er the thicket green.
 O then, though Spenser's self had stray'd
 Beside him through the lovely glade,
 Lending his rich luxuriant glow
 Of fancy, all its charms to show,
 Pointing the stream rejoicing free,
 As captive set at liberty,
 Flashing her sparkling waves abroad,
 And clamouring joyful on her road;
 Pointing where, up the sunny banks,
 The trees retire in scatter'd ranks,
 Save where, advanced before the rest,

On knoll or hillock rears his crest,
 Lonely and huge, the giant Oak,
 As champions, when their band is broke,
 Stand forth to guard the rearward post,
 The bulwark of the scatter'd host—
 All this, and more, might Spenser say,
 Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
 While Wilfrid eyed the distant tower,
 Whose lattice lights Matilda's bower.

VII. The open vale is soon passed o'er,
 Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no more;
 Sinking mid Greta's thickets deep,
 A wild and darker course they keep.
 A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
 As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode!
 Broad shadows o'er their passage fell,
 Deeper and narrower grew the dell;
 It seem'd some mountain, rent and riven,
 A channel for the stream had given,
 So high the cliffs of limestone grey
 Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way,
 Yielding, along their rugged base,
 A flinty footpath's niggard space,
 Where he, who winds 'twixt rock and wave,
 May hear the headlong torrent rave,
 And like a steed in frantic fit,
 That flings the froth from curb and bit,
 May view her chafe her waves to spray,
 O'er every rock that bars her way,
 Till foam-globes on her eddies ride,
 Thick as the schemes of human pride
 That down life's current drive amain,
 As frail, as frothy, and as vain!

VIII. The cliffs that rear their haughty head
 High o'er the river's darksome bed,
 Were now all naked, wild, and grey,
 Now waving all with greenwood spray;
 Here trees to every crevice clung,
 And o'er the dell their branches hung;
 And there, all splinter'd and uneven,
 The shiver'd rocks ascend to heaven;
 Oft, too, the ivy swath'd their breast,
 And wreathed its garland round their crest,
 Or from the spires bade loosely flare
 Its tendrils in the middle air.
 As pennons wont to wave of old
 O'er the high feast of Baron bold,

When revell'd loud the feudal route,
And the arch'd halls return'd their shout;
Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
And such the echoes from her shore.
And so the ivied banners gleam,
Waved wildly o'er the brawling stream.

- ix. Now from the stream the rocks recede,
But leave between no sunny mead,
No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
Oft found by such a mountain strand;
Forming such warm and dry retreat,
As fancy deems the lonely seat,
Where hermit, wandering from his cell,
His rosary might love to tell.
But here, 'twixt rock and river, grew
A dismal grove of sable yew,
With whose sad tints were mingled seen
The blighted fir's sepulchral green.
Seem'd that the trees their shadows cast,
The earth that nourish'd them to blast;
For never knew that swarthy grove
The verdant hue that fairies love;
Nor wilding green, nor woodland flower,
Arose within its baleful bower:
The dank and sable earth receives
Its only carpet from the leaves,
That, from the withering branches cast,
Bestrew'd the ground with every blast.
Though now the sun was o'er the hill,
In this dark spot 'twas twilight still,
Save that on Greta's farther side
Some straggling beams through copsewood glide;
And wild and savage contrast made
That dingle's deep and funeral shade,
With the bright tints of early day,
Which, glimmering through the ivy spray,
On the opposing summit lay.

- x. The lated peasant shunn'd the dell;
For Superstition wont to tell
Of many a grisly sound and sight,
Scaring its path at dead of night.
When Christmas logs blaze high and wide,
Such wonders speed the festal tide;
While Curiosity and Fear,
Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching near,
Till childhood's cheek no longer glows,
And village maidens lose the rose.

The thrilling interest rises higher,
The circle closes nigh and nigher,
And shuddering glance is cast behind,
As louder moans the wintry wind.
Believe, that fitting scene was laid
For such wild tales in Mortham glade;
For who had seen, on Greta's side,
By that dim light fierce Bertram stride,
In such a spot, at such an hour,—
If touch'd by Superstition's power,
Might well have deem'd that Hell had given
A murderer's ghost to upper Heaven,
While Wilfrid's form had seem'd to glide
Like his pale victim by his side.

- XI. Nor think to village swains alone
Are these unearthly terrors known;
For not to rank nor sex confined
Is this vain ague of the mind:
Hearts firm as steel, as marble hard,
'Gainst faith, and love, and pity barr'd,
Have quaked, like aspen leaves in May,
Beneath its universal sway.
Bertram had listed many a tale
Of wonder in his native dale,
That in his secret soul retain'd
The credence they in childhood gain'd:
Nor less his wild adventurous youth
Believed in every legend's truth;
Learn'd when, beneath the tropic gale,
Full swell'd the vessel's steady sail,
And the broad Indian moon her light
Pour'd on the watch of middle night,
When seamen love to hear and tell
Of portent, prodigy, and spell:
What gales are sold on Lapland's shore,
How whistle rash bids tempests roar,
Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light;
Or of that Phantom Ship, whose form
Shoots like a meteor through the storm;
When the dark scud comes driving hard,
And lower'd is every topsail-yard,
And canvas, wove in earthly looms,
No more to brave the storm presumes!
Then, 'mid the war of sea and sky,
Top and top-gallant hoisted high,
Full spread and crowded every sail,
The Demon Frigate braves the gale;

And well the doom'd spectators know
The harbinger of wreck and woe.

xii. Then, too, were told, in stifled tone,
Marvels and omens all their own;
How, by some desert isle or key,
Where Spaniards wrought their cruelty,
Or where the savage pirate's mood
Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
Strange nightly sounds of woe and fear
Appall'd the listening Bucanier,
Whose light-arm'd shallop anchor'd lay
In ambush by the lonely bay.
The groan of grief, the shriek of pain,
Ring from the moonlight groves of cane;
The fierce adventurer's heart they scare,
Who wearies memory for a prayer,
Curses the roadstead, and with gale
Of early morning lifts the sail,
To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
A legend for another bay.

xiii. Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
Train'd in the mystic and the wild,
With this on Bertram's soul at times
Rush'd a dark feeling of his crimes;
Such to his troubled soul their form,
As the pale Death-ship to the storm,
And such their omen dim and dread,
As shrieks and voices of the dead,—
That pang, whose transitory force
Hover'd 'twixt horror and remorse;
That pang, perchance, his bosom press'd,
As Wilfrid sudden he address'd:—
“ Wilfrid, this glen is never trode
Until the sun rides high abroad;
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A Form, that seem'd to dog our way;
Twice from my glance it seem'd to flee,
And shroud itself by cliff or tree.
How think'st thou?—Is our path way-laid?
Or hath thy sire my trust betray'd?
If so ”——Ere, starting from his dream,
That turn'd upon a gentler theme,
Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprung forward, shouting high,
“ Whate'er thou art, thou now shalt stand! ”—
And forth he darted, sword in hand.

xiv. As bursts the levin in its wrath,
 He shot him down the sounding path;
 Rock, wood, and stream, rang wildly out,
 To his loud step and savage shout.
 Seems that the object of his race
 Hath scaled the cliffs; his frantic chase
 Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis bent
 Right up the rock's tall battlement;
 Straining each sinew to ascend,
 Foot, hand, and knee, their aid must lend.
 Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
 Views from beneath, his dreadful way:
 Now to the oak's warp'd roots he clings,
 Now trusts his weight to ivy strings;
 Now, like the wild-goat, must he dare
 An unsupported leap in air;
 Hid in the shrubby rain-course now,
 You mark him by the crashing bough,
 And by his corslet's sullen clank,
 And by the stones spurn'd from the bank,
 And by the hawk scared from her nest,
 And ravens croaking o'er their guest,
 Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay
 The tribute of his bold essay.

xv. See, he emerges!—desperate now
 All farther course—Yon beetling brow,
 In craggy nakedness sublime,
 What heart or foot shall dare to climb?
 It bears no tendril for his clasp,
 Presents no angle to his grasp:
 Sole stay his foot may rest upon,
 Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
 Balanced on such precarious prop,
 He strains his grasp to reach the top.
 Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,
 By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes!
 Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
 It sways, . . . it loosens, . . . it descends!
 And downward holds its headlong way,
 Crashing o'er rock and copsewood spray.
 Loud thunders shake the echoing dell!—
 Fell it alone?—alone it fell.
 Just on the very verge of fate,
 The hardy Bertram's falling weight
 He trusted to his sinewy hands,
 And on the top unharm'd he stands!—

xvi. Wilfrid a safer path pursued;
 At intervals where, roughly hew'd,

Rude steps ascending from the dell
 Render'd the cliffs accessible.
 By circuit slow he thus attain'd
 The height that Risingham had gain'd,
 And when he issued from the wood,
 Before the gate of Mortham stood.
 'Twas a fair scene! the sunbeam lay
 On battled tower and portal grey:
 And from the grassy slope he sees
 The Greta flow to meet the Tees;
 Where, issuing from her darksome bed,
 She caught the morning's eastern red,
 And through the softening vale below
 Roll'd her bright waves, in rosy glow,
 All blushing to her bridal bed,
 Like some shy maid in convent bred;
 While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay,
 Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

xvii. 'Twas sweetly sung that roundelay;
 That summer morn shone blithe and gay;
 But morning beam, and wild-bird's call,
 Awaked not Mortham's silent hall.
 No porter, by the low-brow'd gate,
 Took in the wonted niche his seat;
 To the paved court no peasant drew;
 Waked to their toil no menial crew;
 The maiden's carol was not heard,
 As to her morning task she fared:
 In the void offices around,
 Rung not a hoof, nor bay'd a hound;
 Nor eager steed, with shrilling neigh,
 Accused the lagging groom's delay;
 Untrimm'd, undress'd, neglected now,
 Was alley'd walk and orchard bough;
 All spoke the master's absent care,
 All spoke neglect and disrepair.
 South of the gate, an arrow flight,
 Two mighty elms their limbs unite,
 As if a canopy to spread
 O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;
 For their huge boughs in arches bent
 Above a massive monument,
 Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise,
 With many a scutcheon and device:
 There, spent with toil and sunk in gloom,
 Bertram stood pondering by the tomb.

xviii. "It vanish'd, like a flitting ghost!
 Behind this tomb," he said, "'twas lost—

This tomb, where oft I deem'd lies stored
 Of Mortham's Indian wealth the hoard.
 'Tis true, the aged servants said
 Here his lamented wife is laid;
 But weightier reasons may be guess'd
 For their lord's strict and stern behest,
 That none should on his steps intrude,
 Whene'er he sought this solitude.—
 An ancient mariner I knew,
 What time I sail'd with Morgan's crew,
 Who oft, 'mid our carousals, spake
 Of Raleigh, Frobisher, and Drake;
 Adventurous hearts! who barter'd, bold,
 Their English steel for Spanish gold.
 Trust not, would his experience say,
 Captain or comrade with your prey;
 But seek some charnel, when, at full,
 The moon gilds skeleton and skull:
 There dig, and tomb your precious heap;
 And bid the dead your treasure keep;
 Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
 Their service to the task compel.
 Lacks there such charnel?—kill a slave,
 Or prisoner, on the treasure-grave;
 And bid his discontented ghost
 Stalk nightly on his lonely post.—
 Such was his tale. Its truth, I ween,
 Is in my morning vision seen."—

- XIX. Wilfrid, who scorn'd the legend wild,
 In mingled mirth and pity smiled,
 Much marvelling that a breast so bold
 In such fond tale belief should hold;
 But yet of Bertram sought to know
 The apparition's form and show.—
 The power within the guilty breast,
 Oft vanquish'd, never quite suppress'd,
 That unsubdued and lurking lies
 To take the felon by surprise,
 And force him, as by magic spell,
 In his despite his guilt to tell,—
 That power in Bertram's breast awoke;
 Scarce conscious he was heard, he spoke;
 "'Twas Mortham's form, from foot to head!
 His morion, with the plume of red,
 His shape, his mien—'twas Mortham, right
 As when I slew him in the fight."—
 "Thou slay him?—thou?"—With conscious start
 He heard, then mann'd his haughty heart—

" I slew him ?—I !—I had forgot
 Thou, stripling, knew'st not of the plot.
 But it is spoken—nor will I
 Deed done, or spoken word, deny.
 I slew him ; I ! for thankless pride ;
 'Twas by this hand that Mortham died ! "

xx. Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
 Averse to every active part,
 But most averse to martial broil,
 From danger shrunk, and turn'd from toil ;
 Yet the meek lover of the lyre
 Nursed one brave spark of noble fire,
 Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
 His blood beat high, his hand wax'd strong.
 Not his the nerves that could sustain,
 Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain ;
 But, when that spark blazed forth to flame,
 He rose superior to his frame.
 And now it came, that generous mood :
 And, in full current of his blood,
 On Bertram he laid desperate hand,
 Placed firm his foot, and drew his brand.
 " Should every fiend, to whom thou'rt sold,
 Rise in thine aid, I keep my hold.—
 Arouse there, ho ! take spear and sword !
 Attach the murderer of your Lord ! "

xxi. A moment, fix'd as by a spell,
 Stood Bertram—It seem'd miracle,
 That one so feeble, soft, and tame
 Set grasp on warlike Risingham.
 But when he felt a feeble stroke,
 The fiend within the ruffian woke !
 To wrench the sword from Wilfrid's hand,
 To dash him headlong on the sand,
 Was but one moment's work,—one more
 Had drench'd the blade in Wilfrid's gore ;
 But, in the instant it arose,
 To end his life, his love, his woes,
 A warlike form, that mark'd the scene,
 Presents his rapier sheathed between,
 Parries the fast-descending blow,
 And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his foe ;
 Nor then unscabbarded his brand,
 But, sternly pointing with his hand,
 With monarch's voice forbade the fight,
 And motion'd Bertram from his sight.
 " Go, and repent,"—he said, " while time
 Is given thee ; add not crime to crime."

xxii. Mute, and uncertain, and amazed,
 As on a vision Bertram gazed!
 'Twas Mortham's bearing, bold and high,
 His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
 His look and accent of command,
 The martial gesture of his hand,
 His stately form, spare-built and tall,
 His war-bleach'd locks—'twas Mortham all.
 Through Bertram's dizzy brain career
 A thousand thoughts, and all of fear;
 His wavering faith received not quite
 The form he saw as Mortham's sprite,
 But more he fear'd it, if it stood
 His lord, in living flesh and blood.—
 What spectre can the charnel send,
 So dreadful as an injured friend?
 Then, too, the habit of command,
 Used by the leader of the band,
 When Risingham, for many a day,
 Had march'd and fought beneath his sway,
 Tamed him—and, with reverted face,
 Backwards he bore his sullen pace;
 Oft stopp'd, and oft on Mortham stared,
 And dark as rated mastiff glared;
 But when the tramp of steeds was heard,
 Plunged in the glen, and disappear'd;—
 Nor longer there the Warrior stood,
 Retiring eastward through the wood;
 But first to Wilfrid warning gives,
 "Tell thou to none that Mortham lives."

xxiii. Still rung these words in Wilfrid's ear,
 Hinting he knew not what of fear;
 When nearer came the coursers' tread,
 And, with his father at their head,
 Of horsemen arm'd a gallant power
 Rein'd up their steeds before the tower.
 "Whence these pale looks, my son?" he said:
 "Where's Bertram?—Why that naked blade?"
 Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
 (For Mortham's charge his honour tied,)
 "Bertram is gone—the villain's word
 Avouch'd him murderer of his lord!
 Even now we fought—but, when your tread
 Announced you nigh, the felon fled."
 In Wycliffe's conscious eye appear
 A guilty hope, a guilty fear;
 On his pale brow the dewdrop broke,
 And his lip quiver'd as he spoke:—

- xxiv. "A murderer!—Philip Mortham died
 Amid the battle's wildest tide.
 Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you!
 Yet, grant such strange confession true,
 Pursuit were vain—let him fly far—
 Justice must sleep in civil war."
 A gallant Youth rode near his side,
 Brave Rokeby's page, in battle tried;
 That morn, an embassy of weight
 He brought to Barnard's castle gate,
 And follow'd now in Wycliffe's train,
 An answer for his lord to gain.
 His steed, whose arch'd and sable neck
 An hundred wreaths of foam bedeck,
 Chafed not against the curb more high
 Than he at Oswald's cold reply;
 He bit his lip, implored his saint,
 (His the old faith)—then burst restraint.
- xxv. "Yes! I beheld his bloody fall,
 By that base traitor's dastard ball,
 Just when I thought to measure sword,
 Presumptuous hope! with Mortham's lord.
 And shall the murderer 'scape, who slew
 His leader, generous, brave, and true?
 Escape, while on the dew you trace
 The marks of his gigantic pace?
 No! ere the sun that dew shall dry,
 False Risingham shall yield or die.—
 Ring out the castle 'larum bell!
 Arouse the peasants with the knell!
 Meantime disperse—ride, gallants, ride!
 Beset the wood on every side.
 But if among you one there be,
 That honours Mortham's memory,
 Let him dismount and follow me!
 Else on your crests sit fear and shame,
 And foul suspicion dog your name!"
- xxvi. Instant to earth young REDMOND sprung;
 Instant on earth the harness rung
 Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,
 Who waited not their lord's command.
 Redmond his spurs from buskins drew,
 His mantle from his shoulders threw,
 His pistols in his belt he placed,
 The green-wood gain'd, the footsteps traced,
 Shouted like huntsman to his hounds,
 "To cover, hark!"—and in he bounds.

Scarce heard was Oswald's anxious cry,
 " Suspicion! yes—pursue him—fly—
 But venture not, in useless strife,
 On ruffian desperate of his life,
 Whoever finds him, shoot him dead!
 Five hundred nobles for his head! "

xxvii. The horsemen gallop'd, to make good
 Each path that issued from the wood.
 Loud from the thickets rung the shout
 Of Redmond and his eager route;
 With them was Wilfrid, stung with ire,
 And envying Redmond's martial fire,
 And emulous of fame.—But where
 Is Oswald, noble Mortham's heir?
 He, bound by honour, law, and faith,
 Avenger of his kinsman's death?—
 Leaning against the elmin tree,
 With drooping head and slacken'd knee,
 And clenched teeth, and close-clasp'd hands,
 In agony of soul he stands!
 His downcast eye on earth is bent,
 His soul to every sound is lent;
 For in each shout that cleaves the air,
 May ring discovery and despair.

xxviii. What 'vail'd it him, that brightly play'd
 The morning sun on Mortham's glade?
 All seems in giddy round to ride,
 Like objects on a stormy tide,
 Seen eddying by the moonlight dim,
 Imperfectly to sink and swim.
 What 'vail'd it, that the fair domain,
 Its battled mansion, hill, and plain,
 On which the sun so brightly shone,
 Envied so long, was now his own?
 The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
 Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,
 Had been his choice, could such a doom
 Have open'd Mortham's bloody tomb!
 Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
 To each surmise of hope or fear,
 Murmur'd among the rustics round,
 Who gather'd at the 'larum sound;
 He dared not turn his head away,
 E'en to look up to heaven to pray,
 Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
 For one sharp death-shot from the wood!

xxix. At length, o'erpast that dreadful space,
 Back straggling came the scatter'd chase;
 Jaded and weary, horse and man,
 Return'd the troopers, one by one.
 Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
 All trace was lost of Bertram's way,
 Though Redmond still, up Brignal wood,
 The hopeless quest in vain pursued.—
 O, fatal doom of human race!
 What tyrant passions passions chase!
 Remorse from Oswald's brow is gone,
 Avarice and pride resume their throne;
 The pang of instant terror by,
 They dictate us their slave's reply:—

xxx. “Ay—let him range like hasty hound!
 And if the grim wolf's lair be found,
 Small is my care how goes the game
 With Redmond, or with Risingham.—
 Nay, answer not, thou simple boy!
 Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
 To thee, is of another mood
 To that bold youth, of Erin's blood.
 Thy ditties will she freely praise,
 And pay thy pains with courtly phrase;
 In a rough path will oft command—
 Accept at least—thy friendly hand;
 His she avoids, or, urged and pray'd,
 Unwilling takes his proffer'd aid,
 While conscious passion plainly speaks
 In downcast look and blushing cheeks.
 Whene'er he sings, will she glide nigh,
 And all her soul is in her eye;
 Yet doubts she still to tender free
 The wonted words of courtesy.
 These are strong signs!—yet wherefore sigh,
 And wipe, effeminate, thine eye?
 Thine shall she be, if thou attend
 The counsels of thy sire and friend.

xxxi. “Scarce wert thou gone, when peep of light
 Brought genuine news of Marston's fight.
 Brave Cromwell turn'd the doubtful tide,
 And conquest bless'd the rightful side;
 Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
 Rupert and that bold Marquis fled;
 Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
 Must fine for freedom and estate.
 Of these, committed to my charge,

Is Rokeby, prisoner at large;
Redmond, his page, arrived to say
He reaches Barnard's towers to-day.
Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee!
Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
While her soul floats 'twixt hope and fear;
It is the very change of tide,
When best the female heart is tried—
Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
Are in the current swept to sea;
And the bold swain, who plies his oar,
May lightly row his bark to shore."

CANTO THIRD

- I. The hunting tribes of air and earth
Respect the brethren of their birth;
Nature, who loves the claim of kind,
Less cruel chase to each assign'd.
The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
Watches the wild-duck by the spring;
The slow-hound wakes the fox's lair;
The greyhound presses on the hare;
The eagle pounces on the lamb;
The wolf devours the fleecy dam:
Even tiger fell, and sullen bear,
Their likeness and their lineage spare,
Man, only, mars kind Nature's plan,
And turns the fierce pursuit on man;
Plying war's desultory trade,
Incursion, flight, and ambuscade,
Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
At first the bloody game begun.
- II. The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way,
And knows in distant forest far
Camp his red brethren of the war;
He, when each double and disguise
To baffle the pursuit he tries,
Low crouching now his head to hide,
Where swampy streams through rushes glide,
Now covering with the wither'd leaves
The foot-prints that the dew receives:
He, skill'd in every silvan guile,
Knows not, nor tries, such various wile,

As Risingham, when on the wind
 Arose the loud pursuit behind.
 In Redesdale his youth had heard
 Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
 When Rookan-edge, and Redswair high,
 To bugle rung and blood-hound's cry,
 Announcing Jedwood-axe and spear,
 And Lid'sdale riders in the rear;
 And well his venturous life had proved
 The lessons that his childhood loved.

- III. Oft had he shown, in climes afar,
 Each attribute of roving war;
 The sharpen'd ear, the piercing eye,
 The quick resolve in danger nigh;
 The speed, that in the flight or chase,
 Outstripp'd the Charib's rapid race;
 The steady brain, the sinewy limb,
 To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim;
 The iron frame, inured to bear
 Each dire inclemency of air.
 Nor less confirm'd to undergo
 Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's throe.
 These arts he proved, his life to save,
 In peril oft by land and wave,
 On Arawaca's desert shore,
 Or where La Plata's billows roar.
 When oft the sons of vengeful Spain
 Track'd the marauder's steps in vain.
 These arts, in Indian warfare tried,
 Must save him now by Greta's side.
- IV. 'Twas then, in hour of utmost need,
 He proved his courage, art, and speed.
 Now slow he stalk'd with stealthy pace,
 Now started forth in rapid race,
 Oft doubling back in mazy train.
 To blind the trace the dews retain;
 Now clombe the rocks projecting high,
 To baffle the pursuer's eye;
 Now sought the stream, whose brawling sound
 The echo of his footsteps drown'd.
 But if the forest verge he nears,
 There trample steeds, and glimmer spears;
 If deeper down the copse he drew,
 He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
 Beating each cover while they came,
 As if to start the silvan game.
 'Twas then—like tiger close beset

At every pass with toil and net,
 'Counter'd, where'er he turns his glare,
 By clashing arms and torches' flare,
 Who meditates, with furious bound,
 To burst on hunter, horse, and hound,—
 'Twas then that Bertram's soul arose,
 Prompting to rush upon his foes:
 But as that crouching tiger, cow'd
 By brandish'd steel and shouting crowd,
 Retreats beneath the jungle's shroud,
 Bertram suspends his purpose stern,
 And couches in the brake and fern,
 Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
 The sparkle of his swarthy eye.

- v. Then Bertram might the bearing trace
 Of the bold youth who led the chase;
 Who paused to list for every sound,
 Climb every height to look around,
 Then rushing on with naked sword,
 Each dingle's bosky depths explored.
 'Twas Redmond—by the azure eye;
 'Twas Redmond—by the locks that fly
 Disorder'd from his glowing cheek;
 Mien, face, and form, young Redmond
 A form more active, light, and strong,
 Ne'er shot the ranks of war along;
 The modest, yet the manly mien,
 Might grace the court of maiden queen;
 A face more fair you well might find,
 For Redmond's knew the sun and wind,
 Nor boasted, from their tinge when free,
 The charm of regularity;
 But every feature had the power
 To aid the expression of the hour:
 Whether gay wit, and humour sly,
 Danced laughing in his light-blue eye;
 Or bended brow, and glance of fire,
 And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's ire;
 Or soft and sadden'd glances show
 Her ready sympathy with woe;
 Or in that wayward mood of mind,
 When various feelings are combined,
 When joy and sorrow mingle near,
 And hope's bright wings are check'd by fear,
 And rising doubts keep transport down,
 And anger lends a short-lived frown;
 In that strange mood which maids approve
 Even when they dare not call it love;

With every change his features play'd,
As aspens show the light and shade.

VI. Well Risingham young Redmond knew:
And much he marvell'd that the crew,
Roused to revenge bold Mortham dead,
Were by that Mortham's foeman led;
For never felt his soul the woe,
That wails a generous foeman low,
Far less that sense of justice strong,
That wreaks a generous foeman's wrong.
But small his leisure now to pause;
Redmond is first, whate'er the cause:
And twice that Redmond came so near
Where Bertram couch'd like hunted deer,
The very boughs his steps displace,
Rustled against the ruffian's face,
Who, desperate, twice prepared to start,
And plunge his dagger in his heart!
But Redmond turn'd a different way,
And the bent boughs resumed their sway,
And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,
When roving hunters beat the brake,
Watches with red and glistening eye,
Prepared, if heedless step draw nigh,
With forked tongue and venom'd fang
Instant to dart the deadly pang;
But if the intruders turn aside,
Away his coils unfolded glide,
And through the deep savannah wind,
Some undisturb'd retreat to find.

VII. But Bertram, as he backward drew,
And heard the loud pursuit renew,
And Redmond's hollo on the wind,
Oft mutter'd in his savage mind—
“Redmond O'Neale! were thou and I
Alone this day's event to try,
With not a second here to see,
But the grey cliff and oaken tree,—
That voice of thine, that shouts so loud,
Should ne'er repeat its summons proud!
No! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer bower.”
Eluded, now behind him die,
Faint and more faint, each hostile cry;
He stands in Scargill wood alone,

Nor hears he now a harsher tone
That the hoarse cushat's plaintive cry,
Or Greta's sound that murmurs by;
And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII. He listen'd long with anxious heart,
Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
And, while his stretch'd attention glows,
Refused his weary frame repose.
'Twas silence all—he laid him down,
Where purple heath profusely strown,
And throatwort, with its azure bell,
And moss and thyme his cushion swell.
There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
The course of Greta's playful tide;
Beneath, her banks now eddying dun,
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favourite gem
Of Albin's mountain-diadem.
Then, tired to watch the current's play,
He turn'd his weary eyes away,
To where the bank opposing show'd
Its huge, square cliffs through shaggy wood.
One, prominent above the rest,
Rear'd to the sun its pale grey breast;
Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew;
A thousand varièd lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side,
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
Were mantled now by verdant thorn.
Such was the scene's wild majesty,
That fill'd stern Bertram's gazing eye.

IX. In sullen mood he lay reclined,
Revolving, in his stormy mind,
The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason spilt;
A crime, it seem'd, so dire and dread,
That it had power to wake the dead.
Then, pondering on his life betray'd
By Oswald's art to Redmond's blade,
In treacherous purpose to withhold,
So seem'd it, Mortham's promised gold,

A deep and full revenge he vow'd
 On Redmond, forward, fierce, and proud;
 Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
 Redoubled vengeance, swift and dire!—
 If, in such mood, (as legends say,
 And well believed that simple day,)
 The Enemy of Man has power
 To profit by the evil hour,
 Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
 His soul's redemption for revenge!
 But though his vows, with such a fire
 Of earnest and intense desire
 For vengeance dark and fell, were made,
 As well might reach hell's lowest shade,
 No deeper clouds the grove embrown'd,
 No nether thunders shook the ground;—
 The demon knew his vassal's heart,
 And spared temptation's needless art.

- x. Oft, mingled with the direful theme,
 Came Mortham's form—Was it a dream?
 Or had he seen, in vision true,
 That very Mortham whom he slew?
 Or had in living flesh appear'd
 The only man on earth he fear'd?—
 To try the mystic cause intent,
 His eyes, that on the cliff were bent,
 'Counter'd at once a dazzling glance,
 Like sunbeam flash'd from sword or lance.
 At once he started as for fight,
 But not a foeman was in sight;
 He heard the cushat's murmur hoarse,
 He heard the river's sounding course;
 The solitary woodlands lay,
 As slumbering in the summer ray.
 He gazed, like lion roused, around,
 Then sunk again upon the ground.
 'Twas but, he thought, some fitful beam,
 Glanced sudden from the sparkling stream;
 Then plunged him from his gloomy train
 Of ill-connected thoughts again,
 Until a voice behind him cried,
 "Bertram! well met on Greta side."
- xi. Instant his sword was in his hand,
 As instant sunk the ready brand;
 Yet, dubious still, opposed he stood
 To him that issued from the wood:
 "Guy Denzil!—is it thou?" he said;

"Do we two meet in Scargill shade!—
 Stand back a space!—thy purpose show,
 Whether thou comest as friend or foe.
 Report hath said, that Denzil's name
 From Rokeby's band was razed with shame."—
 "A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
 Who told his knight, in peevish zeal,
 Of my marauding on the clowns
 Of Calverley and Bradford downs.
 I reck not. In a war to strive,
 Where, save the leaders, none can thrive,
 Suits ill my mood; and better game
 Awaits us both, if thou'rt the same
 Unscrupulous, bold Risingham,
 Who watched with me in midnight dark,
 To snatch a deer from Rokeby-park.
 How think'st thou?"—"Speak thy purpose out;
 I love not mystery or doubt."—

XII. "Then, list.—Not far there lurk a crew
 Of trusty comrades, staunch and true,
 Glean'd from both factions—Roundheads, freed
 From cant of sermon and of creed;
 And Cavaliers, whose souls, like mine,
 Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
 Wiser, we judge, by dale and wold,
 A warfare of our own to hold,
 Than breathe our last on battle-down,
 For cloak or surplice, mace or crown.
 Our schemes are laid, our purpose set,
 A chief and leader lack we yet.—
 Thou art a wanderer, it is said;
 For Mortham's death, thy steps way-laid,
 Thy head at price—so say our spies,
 Who range the valley in disguise.
 Join then with us:—though wild debate
 And wrangling rend our infant state,
 Each to an equal loth to bow,
 Will yield to chief renown'd as thou."—

XIII. "Even now," thought Bertram, passion-stirr'd,
 "I call'd on hell, and hell has heard!
 What lack I, vengeance to command,
 But of stanch comrades such a band?
 This Denzil, vow'd to every evil,
 Might read a lesson to the devil.
 Well, be it so! each knave and fool
 Shall serve as my revenge's tool."—
 Aloud, "I take thy proffer, Guy,

But tell me where thy comrades lie? "—
 "Not far from hence," Guy Denzil said;
 "Descend, and cross the river's bed,
 Where rises yonder cliff so grey."—
 "Do thou," said Bertram, "lead the way."
 Then mutter'd, "It is best make sure;
 Guy Denzil's faith was never pure."
 He follow'd down the steep descent,
 Then through the Greta's streams they went;
 And, when they reach'd the farther shore,
 They stood the lonely cliff before.

- xiv. With wonder Bertram heard within
 The flinty rock a murmur'd din;
 But when Guy pull'd the wilding spray,
 And brambles, from its base away,
 He saw, appearing to the air,
 A little entrance, low and square,
 Like opening cell of hermit lone,
 Dark, winding through the living stone.
 Here enter'd Denzil, Bertram here;
 And loud and louder on their ear,
 As from the bowels of the earth,
 Resounded shouts of boisterous mirth.
 Of old, the cavern strait and rude,
 In slaty rock the peasant hew'd;
 And Brignall's woods, and Scargill's wave,
 E'en now, o'er many a sister cave,
 Where, far within the darksome rift,
 The wedge and lever ply their thrift.
 But war had silenced rural trade,
 And the deserted mine was made
 The banquet-hall and fortress too,
 Of Denzil and his desperate crew.—
 There Guilt his anxious revel kept;
 There, on his sordid pallet, slept
 Guilt-born Excess, the goblet drain'd
 Still in his slumbering grasp retain'd;
 Regret was there, his eye still cast
 With vain repining on the past;
 Among the feasters waited near
 Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,
 And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
 With his own crimes reproaching heaven;
 While Bertram show'd, amid the crew,
 The Master-Fiend that Milton drew.

- xv. Hark! the loud revel wakes again,
 To greet the leader of the train.

Behold the group by the pale lamp,
That struggles with the earthy damp.
By what strange features Vice hath known,
To single out and mark her own!
Yet some there are, whose brows retain
Less deeply stamp'd her brand and stain.
See yon pale stripling! when a boy,
A mother's pride, a father's joy!
Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls reclined
An early image fills his mind:
The cottage, once his sire's, he sees,
Embower'd upon the banks of Tees;
He views sweet Winston's woodland scene,
And shares the dance on Gainford-green.
A tear is springing—but the zest
Of some wild tale, or brutal jest,
Hath to loud laughter stirr'd the rest.
On him they call, the aptest mate
For jovial song and merry feat:
Fast flies his dream—with dauntless air,
As one victorious o'er Despair,
He bids the ruddy cup go round,
Till sense and sorrow both are drown'd:
And soon, in merry wassail, he,
The life of all their revelry,
Peals his loud song!—The muse has found
Her blossoms on the wildest ground,
'Mid noxious weeds at random strew'd,
Themselves all profitless and rude.—
With desperate merriment he sung,
The cavern to the chorus rung;
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse's bitter agony.

SONG

- xvi. O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily,—

Chorus

“O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.”—

" If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
 To leave both tower and town,
 Thou first must guess what life lead we,
 That dwell by dale and down!
 And if thou canst that riddle read,
 As read full well you may,
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
 As blithe as Queen of May."—

Chorus

Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are green;
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
 Than reign our English queen.

- xvii. " I read you, by your bugle-horn,
 And by your palfrey good,
 I read you for a ranger sworn,
 To keep the king's greenwood."—
 " A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
 And 'tis at peep of light;
 His blast is heard at merry morn,
 And mine at dead of night."—

Chorus

Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are gay;
 I would I were with Edmund there,
 To reign his Queen of May!

" With burnish'd brand and musketoon,
 So gallantly you come,
 I read you for a bold Dragoon,
 That lists the tuck of drum."—
 " I list no more the tuck of drum,
 No more the trumpet hear;
 But when the beetle sounds his hum,
 My comrades take the spear.

Chorus

" And, O! though Brignall banks be fair,
 And Greta woods be gay,
 Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
 Would reign my Queen of May!

- xviii. " Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
 A nameless death I'll die!
 The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
 Were better mate than I!

And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

Chorus

“ Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.”

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
Was silence on the sullen throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their glee
With note of coarser minstrelsy.
But, far apart, in dark divan,
Denzil and Bertram many a plan,
Of import foul and fierce, design'd,
While still on Bertram's grasping mind
The wealth of murder'd Mortham hung;
Though half he fear'd his daring tongue,
When it should give his wishes birth,
Might raise a spectre from the earth!

- xix. At length his wondrous tale he told:
When, scornful, smiled his comrade bold;
For, train'd in licence of a court,
Religion's self was Denzil's sport;
Then judge in what contempt he held
The visionary tales of eld!
His awe for Bertram scarce repress'd
The unbeliever's sneering jest.
“ 'Twere hard,” he said, “ for sage or seer,
To spell the subject of your fear;
Nor do I boast the art renown'd,
Vision and omen to expound.
Yet, faith if I must needs afford
To spectre watching treasured hoard,
As bandog keeps his master's roof,
Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
This doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt;
For why his guard on Mortham hold,
When Rokeby castle hath the gold
Thy patron won on Indian soil,
By stealth, by piracy, and spoil? ”—

- xx. At this he paused—for angry shame
Lower'd on the brow of Risingham.

He blush'd to think, that he should seem
 Assertor of an airy dream,
 And gave his wrath another theme.
 "Denzil," he says, "though lowly laid,
 Wrong not the memory of the dead;
 For, while he lived, at Mortham's look
 Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook!
 And when he tax'd thy breach of word
 To yon fair Rose of Allenford,
 I saw thee crouch like chasten'd hound,
 Whose back the huntsman's lash hath found.
 Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
 The spoil of piracy or stealth;
 He won it bravely with his brand,
 When Spain waged warfare with our land.
 Mark, too—I brook no idle jeer,
 Nor couple Bertram's name with fear;
 Mine is but half the demon's lot,
 For I believe, but tremble not.—
 Enough of this.—Say, why this hoard
 Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle stored;
 Or think'st that Mortham would bestow
 His treasure with his faction's foe?"

- xxi. Soon quench'd was Denzil's ill-timed mirth;
 Rather he would have seen the earth
 Give to ten thousand spectres birth,
 Than venture to awake to flame
 The deadly wrath of Risingham.
 Submiss he answer'd,—“Mortham's mind,
 Thou know'st, to joy was ill inclined.
 In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
 A lusty reveller was he;
 But since return'd from over sea,
 A sullen and a silent mood
 Hath numb'd the current of his blood.
 Hence he refused each kindly call
 To Rokeby's hospitable hall,
 And our stout knight, at dawn of morn
 Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
 Nor less, when eve his oaks embrown'd,
 To see the ruddy cup go round,
 Took umbrage that a friend so near
 Refused to share his chase and cheer;
 Thus did the kindred barons jar,
 Ere they divided in the war.
 Yet, trust me, friend, Matilda fair
 Of Mortham's wealth is destined heir.”—

- xxii. "Destined to her! to yon slight maid!
The prize my life had wellnigh paid,
When 'gainst Laroche, by Cayo's wave,
I fought my patron's wealth to save!—
Denzil, I knew him long, yet ne'er
Knew him that joyous cavalier,
Whom youthful friends and early fame
Call'd soul of gallantry and game.
A moody man, he sought our crew,
Desperate and dark, whom no one knew;
And rose, as men with us must rise,
By scorning life and all its ties.
On each adventure rash he roved,
As danger for itself he loved;
On his sad brow nor mirth nor wine
Could e'er one wrinkled knot untwine;
Ill was the omen if he smiled,
For 'twas in peril stern and wild;
But when he laugh'd, each luckless mate
Might hold our fortune desperate.
Foremost he fought in every broil,
Then scornful turned him from the spoil;
Nay, often strove to bar the way
Between his comrades and their prey;
Preaching, even then, to such as we,
Hot with our dear-bought victory,
Of mercy and humanity.
- xxiii. "I loved him well—His fearless part,
His gallant leading, won my heart.
And after each victorious fight,
'Twas I that wrangled for his right,
Redeem'd his portion of the prey
That greedier mates had torn away:
In field and storm thrice saved his life,
And once amid our comrades' strife.—
Yes, I have loved thee! Well hath proved
My toil, my danger, how I loved!
Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,
Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.
Rise if thou canst!" he look'd around,
And sternly stamp'd upon the ground—
"Rise, with thy bearing proud and high,
Even as this morn it met mine eye,
And give me, if thou darest, the lie!"
He paused—then, calm and passion-freed,
Bade Denzil with his tale proceed.
- xxiv. "Bertram, to thee I need not tell,
What thou hast cause to wot so well,

How Superstition's nets were twined
 Around the Lord of Mortham's mind!
 But since he drove thee from his tower,
 A maid he found in Greta's bower,
 Whose speech, like David's harp, had sway,
 To charm his evil fiend away.
 I know not if her features moved
 Remembrance of the wife he loved;
 But he would gaze upon her eye,
 Till his mood soften'd to a sigh.
 He, whom no living mortal sought
 To question of his secret thought,
 Now every thought and care confess'd
 To his fair niece's faithful breast;
 Nor was there aught of rich and rare,
 In earth, in ocean, or in air,
 But it must deck Matilda's hair.
 Her love still bound him unto life;
 But then awoke the civil strife,
 And menials bore, by his commands,
 Three coffers, with their iron bands,
 From Mortham's vault, at midnight deep,
 To her lone bower in Rokeby-Keep,
 Ponderous with gold and plate of pride
 His gift, if he in battle died."—

xxv. "Then Denzil, as I guess, lays train,
 These iron-banded chests to gain;
 Else, wherefore should he hover here,
 Where many a peril waits him near,
 For all his feats of war and peace,
 For plunder'd boors, and harts of greese?
 Since through the hamlets as he fared,
 What hearth has Guy's marauding spared,
 Or where the chase that hath not rung
 With Denzil's bow, at midnight strung?"—
 "I hold my wont—my rangers go,
 Even now to track a milk-white doe.
 By Rokeby-hall she takes her lair,
 In Greta wood she harbours fair,
 And when my huntsman marks her way,
 What think'st thou, Bertram, of the prey?
 Were Rokeby's daughter in our power,
 We rate her ransom at her dower."—

xxvi. "'Tis well!—there's vengeance in the thought
 Matilda is by Wilfrid sought;
 And hot-brain'd Redmond, too, 'tis said,
 Pays lover's homage to the maid.

Bertram she scorn'd—If met by chance,
 She turn'd from me her shuddering glance,
 Like a nice dame, that will not brook
 On what she hates and loathes to look;
 She told to Mortham she could ne'er
 Behold me without secret fear,
 Foreboding evil;—She may rue
 To find her prophecy fall true!—
 The war has weeded Rokeby's train,
 Few followers in his halls remain;
 If thy scheme miss, then, brief and bold,
 We are enow to storm the hold;
 Bear off the plunder, and the dame,
 And leave the castle all in flame."—

xxvii. "Still art thou Valour's venturous son!
 Yet ponder first the risk to run:
 The menials of the castle, true,
 And stubborn to their charge, though few;
 The wall to scale—the moat to cross—
 The wicket-grate—the inner fosse"—
 —"Fool! if we blench for toys like these,
 On what fair guerdon can we seize?
 Our hardest venture, to explore
 Some wretched peasant's fenceless door,
 And the best prize we bear away,
 The earnings of his sordid day."—
 "A while thy hasty taunt forbear:
 In sight of road more sure and fair,
 Thou wouldst not choose, in blindfold wrath,
 Or wantonness, a desperate path?
 List, then;—for vantage or assault,
 From gilded vane to dungeon-vault,
 Each pass of Rokeby-house I know:
 There is one postern, dark and low,
 That issues at a secret spot,
 By most neglected or forgot.
 Now, could a spial of our train
 On fair pretext admittance gain,
 That sally-port might be unbarr'd:
 Then, vain were battlement and ward!"—

xxviii. "Now speak'st thou well:—to me the same,
 If force or art shall urge the game;
 Indifferent, if like fox I wind,
 Or spring like tiger on the hind.—
 But, hark! our merry-men so gay
 Troll forth another roundelay."—

SONG

"A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
 A weary lot is thine!
 To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
 And press the rue for wine!
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
 A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
 No more of me you knew,
My love!
 No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
 The rose is budding fain;
 But she shall bloom in winter snow,
 Ere we two meet again."
 He turn'd his charger as he spake,
 Upon the river shore,
 He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
 Said, "Adieu for evermore,
My love!
 And adieu for evermore."—

- xxix. "What youth is this, your band among.
 The best for minstrelsy and song!
 In his wild notes seem aptly met
 A strain of pleasure and regret."—
 "Edmond of Winston is his name;
 The hamlet sounded with the fame
 Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
 Now center'd all in Brignall cave!
 I watch him well—his wayward course
 Shows oft a tincture of remorse.
 Some early love-shaft grazed his heart,
 And oft the scar will ache and smart.
 Yet is he useful;—of the rest,
 By fits, the darling and the jest,
 His harp, his story, and his lay,
 Oft aid the idle hours away:
 When unemploy'd, each fiery mate
 Is ripe for mutinous debate.
 He tuned his strings e'en now—again
 He wakes them, with a blither strain."

SONG

Allen-a-Dale

- xxx. Allen-a-Dale has no fagot for burning,
 Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
 Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,

Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.
Come, read me my riddle! come, hearken my tale!
And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in pride,
And he views his domains upon Arkindale side.
The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
The chase for the wild, and the park for the tame;
Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as
bright;
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his word;
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will vail,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets Allen-a-Dale.

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
The mother, she ask'd of his household and home:
"Though the castle of Richmond stand fair on the
hill,
My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows gallanter still;
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
And with all its bright spangles!" said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel, and the mother was stone;
They lifted the latch, and they bade him be gone;
But loud, on the morrow, their wail and their cry:
He had laugh'd on the lass with his bonny black eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale!

xxx. "Thou see'st that, whether sad or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay.
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O! 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape."—
"Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—
Soft! who comes here?"—"My trusty spy.
Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?"—
"I have—but two fair stags are near.
I watch'd her, as she slowly stray'd
From Egliston up Thorsgill glade;
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side,
And then young Redmond, in his pride,
Shot down to meet them on their way:

Much, as it seem'd, was theirs to say:
 There's time to pitch both toil and net,
 Before their path be homeward set."
 A hurried and a whisper'd speech
 Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach;
 Who, turning to the robber band,
 Bade four, the bravest, take the brand.

CANTO FOURTH

- I. When Denmark's raven soar'd on high,
 Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
 Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
 Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke,
 And the broad shadow of her wing
 Blacken'd each cataract and spring,
 Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
 Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force;
 Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
 Fix'd on each vale a Runic name,
 Rear'd high their altar's rugged stone,
 And gave their Gods the land they won.
 Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine,
 And one sweet brooklet's silver line,
 And Woden's Croft did title gain
 From the stern Father of the Slain;
 But to the Monarch of the Mace,
 That held in fight the foremost place,
 To Odin's son, and Sifia's spouse,
 Near Stratforth high they paid their vows,
 Remember'd Thor's victorious fame,
 And gave the dell the Thunderer's name.
- II. Yet Scald or Kemper err'd, I ween,
 Who gave that soft and quiet scene,
 With all its varied light and shade,
 And every little sunny glade,
 And the blithe brook that strolls along
 Its pebbled bed with summer song,
 To the grim God of blood and scar,
 The grisly King of Northern War.
 O, better were its banks assign'd
 To spirits of a gentler kind!
 For where the thicket-groups recede,
 And the rath primrose decks the mead,
 The velvet grass seems carpet meet
 For the light fairies' lively feet.

Yon tufted knoll, with daisies strown,
Might make proud Oberon a throne,
While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
Puck should brood o'er his frolic sly;
And where profuse the wood-vetch clings
Round ash and elm, in verdant rings,
Its pale and azure-pencill'd flower
Should canopy Titania's bower.

- III. Here rise no cliffs the vale to shade;
But, skirting every sunny glade,
In fair variety of green
The woodland lends its silvan screen.
Hoary, yet haughty, frowns the oak,
Its boughs by weight of ages broke;
And towers erect, in sable spire,
The pine-tree scathed by lightning-fire;
The drooping ash and birch, between,
Hang their fair tresses o'er the green,
And all beneath, at random grow
Each coppice dwarf of varied show,
Or, round the stems profusely twined,
Fling summer odours on the wind.
Such varied group Urbino's hand
Round Him of Tarsus nobly plann'd,
What time he bade proud Athens own
On Mars's Mount the God Unknown!
Then grey Philosophy stood nigh,
Though bent by age, in spirit high:
There rose the scar-seam'd veteran's spear,
There Grecian Beauty bent to hear,
While Childhood at her foot was placed,
Or clung delighted to her waist.
- IV. "And rest we here," Matilda said,
And sat her in the varying shade.
"Chance-met, we well may steal an hour,
To friendship due, from fortune's power.
Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister-friend;
And, Redmond, thou, at my behest,
No farther urge thy desperate 'quest.
For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft;
Wellnigh an orphan, and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'erthrown."
Wilfrid, with wonted kindness graced,
Beside her on the turf she placed;
Then paused, with downcast look and eye,

Nor bade young Redmond seat him nigh.
 Her conscious diffidence he saw,
 Drew backward, as in modest awe,
 And sat a little space removed,
 Unmark'd to gaze on her he loved.

- v. Wreathed in its dark-brown rings, her hair
 Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
 Half hid and half reveal'd to view
 Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
 The rose, with faint and feeble streak,
 So slightly tinged the maiden's cheek,
 That you had said her hue was pale;
 But if she faced the summer gale,
 Or spoke, or sung, or quicker moved,
 Or heard the praise of those she loved,
 Or when of interest was express'd
 Aught that waked feeling in her breast,
 The mantling blood in ready play
 Rivall'd the blush of rising day.
 There was a soft and pensive grace,
 A cast of thought upon her face,
 That suited well the forehead high,
 The eyelash dark, and downcast eye;
 The mild expression spoke a mind
 In duty firm, composed, resign'd;
 'Tis that which Roman art has given,
 To mark their maiden Queen of Heaven.
 In hours of sport, that mood gave way
 To Fancy's light and frolic play;
 And when the dance, or tale, or song,
 In harmless mirth sped time along,
 Full oft her doating sire would call
 His Maud the merriest of them all.
 But days of war and civil crime,
 Allow'd but ill such festal time,
 And her soft pensiveness of brow
 Had deepen'd into sadness now.
 In Marston field her father ta'en,
 Her friends dispersed, brave Mortham slain,
 While every ill her soul foretold,
 From Oswald's thirst of power and gold,
 And boding thoughts that she must part
 With a soft vision of her heart,—
 All lower'd around the lovely maid,
 To darken her dejection's shade.

- vi. Who has not heard—while Erin yet
 Strove 'gainst the Saxon's iron bit—

Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel,
Against St. George's cross blazed high
The banners of his Tanistry,
To fiery Essex gave the foil,
And reign'd a prince on Ulster's soil?
But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died,
And Avon-Duff to ocean bore
His billows red with Saxon gore.
'Twas first in that disastrous fight,
Rokeby and Mortham proved their might.
There had they fallen 'mongst the rest,
But pity touch'd a chieftain's breast;
The Tanist he to great O'Neale;
He check'd his followers' bloody zeal,
To quarter took the kinsmen bold,
And bore them to his mountain-hold,
Gave them each silvan joy to know,
Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods could show,
Shared with them Erin's festal cheer,
Show'd them the chase of wolf and deer,
And, when a fitting time was come,
Safe and unransom'd sent them home,
Loaded with many a gift, to prove
A generous foe's respect and love.

VII. Years speed away. On Rokeby's head
Some touch of early snow was shed;
Calm he enjoy'd, by Greta's wave,
The peace which James the Peaceful gave,
While Mortham, far beyond the main,
Waged his fierce wars on Indian Spain.—
It chanced upon a wintry night,
That whiten'd Stanmore's stormy height,
The chase was o'er, the stag was kill'd,
In Rokeby-hall the cups were fill'd,
And by the huge stone chimney sate
The Knight in hospitable state.
Moonless the sky, the hour was late,
When a loud summons shook the gate,
And sore for entrance and for aid
A voice of foreign accent pray'd.
The porter answer'd to the call,
And instant rush'd into the hall
A Man, whose aspect and attire
Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII. His plaited hair in elf-locks spread
Around his bare and matted head;

On leg and thigh, close stretch'd and trim,
 His vesture show'd the sinewy limb;
 In saffron dyed, a linen vest
 Was frequent folded round his breast;
 A mantle long and loose he wore,
 Shaggy with ice, and stain'd with gore.
 He clasp'd a burden to his heart,
 And, resting on a knotted dart,
 The snow from hair and beard he shook,
 And round him gazed with wilder'd look.
 Then up the hall, with staggering pace,
 He hasten'd by the blaze to place,
 Half lifeless from the bitter air,
 His load, a Boy of beauty rare.
 To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
 Then stood erect his tale to show,
 With wild majestic port and tone,
 Like envoy of some barbarous throne.
 "Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby, hear!
 Turlough O'Neale salutes thee dear;
 He graces thee, and to thy care
 Young Redmond gives, his grandson fair.
 He bids thee breed him as thy son,
 For Turlough's days of joy are done;
 And other lords have seized his land,
 And faint and feeble is his hand;
 And all the glory of Tyrone
 Is like a morning vapour flown.
 To bind the duty on thy soul,
 He bids thee think on Erin's bowl!
 If any wrong the young O'Neale,
 He bids thee think of Erin's steel.
 To Mortham first this charge was due,
 But, in his absence, honours you.—
 Now is my master's message by,
 And Ferraight will contented die."

- ix. His look grew fix'd, his cheek grew pale,
 He sunk when he had told his tale;
 For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
 A mortal wound was in his side.
 Vain was all aid—in terror wild,
 And sorrow, scream'd the orphan Child.
 Poor Ferraight raised his wistful eyes,
 And faintly strove to soothe his cries;
 All reckless of his dying pain,
 He blest and blest him o'er again!
 And kiss'd the little hands outspread,
 And kiss'd and cross'd the infant head,

And, in his native tongue and phrase,
Pray'd to each saint to watch his days;
Then all his strength together drew,
The charge to Rokeby to renew.
When half was falter'd from his breast,
And half by dying signs express'd,
" Bless the O'Neale! " he faintly said,
And thus the faithful spirit fled.

- x. 'Twas long ere soothing might prevail
Upon the Child to end the tale;
And then he said, that from his home
His grandsire had been forced to roam,
Which had not been if Redmond's hand
Had but had strength to draw the brand,
The brand of Lenaugh More the Red,
That hung beside the grey wolf's head.—
'Twas from his broken phrase descried,
His foster-father was his guide,
Who, in his charge, from Ulster bore
Letters and gifts a goodly store;
But ruffians met them in the wood,
Ferraught in battle boldly stood,
Till wounded and o'erpower'd at length,
And stripp'd of all, his failing strength
Just bore him here—and then the child
Renew'd again his moaning wild.
- xi. The tear down childhood's cheek that flows,
Is like the dewdrop on the rose;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry.
Won by their care, the orphan Child
Soon on his new protector smiled,
With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,
Through his thick curls of flaxen hair,
But blithest laugh'd that cheek and eye,
When Rokeby's little Maid was nigh;
'Twas his, with elder brother's pride,
Matilda's tottering steps to guide;
His native lays in Irish tongue,
To soothe her infant ear he sung,
And primrose twined with daisy fair,
To form a chaplet for her hair.
By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,
The children still were hand in hand,
And good Sir Richard smiling eyed
The early knot so kindly tied.

- xii. But summer months bring wilding shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit;
And years draw on our human span,
From child to boy, from boy to man;
And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green.
He loves to wake the felon boar,
In his dark haunt on Greta's shore,
And loves, against the deer so dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the gun:
Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,
And down its cluster'd stores to hail,
Where young Matilda holds her veil.
And she, whose veil receives the shower,
Is alter'd too, and knows her power;
Assumes a monitress's pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide;
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-boar fought and fell,
How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and greenwood answer flung;
Then blesses her, that man can find
A pastime of such savage kind!
- xiii. But Redmond knew to weave his tale
So well with praise of wood and dale,
And knew so well each point to trace,
Gives living interest to the chase,
And knew so well o'er all to throw
His spirit's wild romantic glow,
That, while she blamed, and while she fear'd,
She loved each venturous tale she heard.
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
To bower and hall their steps restrain,
Together they explored the page
Of glowing bard or gifted sage;
Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
The minstrel art alternate tried,
While gladsome harp and lively lay
Bade winter-night flit fast away:
Thus, from their childhood, blending still
Their sport, their study, and their skill,
An union of the soul they prove,
But must not think that it was love.
But though they dared not, envious Fame
Soon dared to give that union name;
And when so often, side by side,
From year to year the pair she eyed,

She sometimes blamed the good old Knight,
As dull of ear and dim of sight,
Sometimes his purpose would declare,
That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

xiv. The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
And bandage from the lovers' eyes;
'Twas plain that Oswald, for his son,
Had Rokeby's favour wellnigh won.
Now must they meet with change of cheer,
With mutual looks of shame and fear;
Now must Matilda stray apart,
To school her disobedient heart:
And Redmond now alone must rue
The love he never can subdue.
But factions rose, and Rokeby sware,
No rebel's son should wed his heir;
And Redmond, nurtured while a child
In many a bard's traditions wild,
Now sought the lonely wood or stream,
To cherish there a happier dream,
Of maiden won by sword or lance,
As in the regions of romance;
And count the heroes of his line,
Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,
Shane-Dymas wild, and Geraldine,
And Connan-more, who vow'd his race
For ever to the fight and chase,
And cursed him, of his lineage born,
Should sheathe the sword to reap the corn,
Or leave the mountain and the wold,
To shroud himself in castled hold.
From such examples hope he drew,
And brighten'd as the trumpet blew.

xv. If brides were won by heart and blade,
Redmond had both his cause to aid,
And all beside of nurture rare
That might beseem a baron's heir.
Turlough O'Neale, in Erin's strife,
On Rokeby's Lord bestow'd his life,
And well did Rokeby's generous Knight
Young Redmond for the deed requite.
Nor was his liberal care and cost
Upon the gallant stripling lost:
Seek the North-Riding broad and wide,
Like Redmond none could steed bestride;
From Tynemouth search to Cumberland,
Like Redmond none could wield a brand;

And then, of humour kind and free,
 And bearing him to each degree
 With frank and fearless courtesy,
 There never youth was form'd to steal
 Upon the heart like brave O'Neale.

- xvi. Sir Richard loved him as his son;
 And when the days of peace were done,
 And to the gales of war he gave
 The banner of his sires to wave,
 Redmond, distinguish'd by his care,
 He chose that honour'd flag to bear,
 And named his page, the next degree,
 In that old time, to chivalry.
 In five pitch'd fields he well maintain'd
 The honour'd place his worth obtain'd,
 And high was Redmond's youthful name
 Blazed in the roll of martial fame.
 Had fortune smiled on Marston fight,
 The eve had seen him dubb'd a knight;
 Twice, 'mid the battle's doubtful strife
 Of Rokeby's Lord he saved the life,
 But when he saw him prisoner made,
 He kiss'd and then resign'd his blade,
 And yielded him an easy prey
 To those who led the Knight away;
 Resolved Matilda's sire should prove
 In prison, as in fight, his love.
- xvii. When lovers meet in adverse hour,
 'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
 A watery ray, an instant seen
 The darkly closing clouds between.
 As Redmond on the turf reclined,
 The past and present fill'd his mind:
 "It was not thus," Affection said,
 "I dream'd of my return, dear maid!
 Not thus, when from thy trembling hand,
 I took the banner and the brand,
 When round me, as the bugles blew,
 Their blades three hundred warriors drew
 And, while the standard I unroll'd,
 Clash'd their bright arms, with clamour bold.
 Where is that banner now?—its pride
 Lies 'whelm'd in Ouse's sullen tide!
 Where now these warriors?—in their gore,
 They cumber Marston's dismal moor!
 And what avails a useless brand,
 Held by a captive's shackled hand,

That only would his life retain,
To aid thy sire to bear his chain! "
Thus Redmond to himself apart;
Nor lighter was his rival's heart;
For Wilfrid, while his generous soul
Disdain'd to profit by control,
By many a sign could mark too plain,
Save with such aid, his hopes were vain.—
But now Matilda's accents stole
On the dark visions of their soul,
And bade their mournful musing fly,
Like mist before the zephyr's sigh.

- xviii. " I need not to my friends recall,
How Mortham shunn'd my father's hall;
A man of silence and of woe,
Yet ever anxious to bestow
On my poor self whate'er could prove
A kinsman's confidence and love.
My feeble aid could sometimes chase
The clouds of sorrow for a space:
But oftener, fix'd beyond my power,
I mark'd his deep despondence lower.
One dismal cause, by all unguess'd,
His fearful confidence confess'd;
And twice it was my hap to see
Examples of that agony,
Which for a season can o'erstrain
And wreck the structure of the brain.
He had the awful power to know
The approaching mental overthrow,
And while his mind had courage yet
To struggle with the dreadful fit,
The victim writhed against its throes,
Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows.
This malady, I well could mark,
Sprung from some direful cause and dark;
But still he kept its source conceal'd,
Till arming for the civil field;
Then in my charge he bade me hold
A treasure huge of gems and gold,
With this disjointed dismal scroll,
That tells the secret of his soul,
In such wild words as oft betray
A mind by anguish forced astray."—

MORTHAM'S HISTORY

- xix. " Matilda! thou hast seen me start,
As if a dagger thrill'd my heart,

When it has hap'd some casual phrase
 Waked memory of my former days.
 Believe, that few can backward cast
 Their thoughts with pleasure on the past;
 But I!—my youth was rash and vain,
 And blood and rage my manhood stain,
 And my grey hairs must now descend
 To my cold grave without a friend!
 Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
 Thy kinsman, when his guilt is known.
 And must I lift the bloody veil,
 That hides my dark and fatal tale!
 I must—I will—Pale phantom, cease!
 Leave me one little hour in peace!
 Thus haunted, think'st thou I have skill
 Thine own commission to fulfil?
 Or, while thou point'st with gesture fierce,
 Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody hearse,
 How can I paint thee as thou wert,
 So fair in face, so warm in heart!

xx. "Yes, she was fair!—Matilda, thou
 Hast a soft sadness on thy brow;
 But hers was like the sunny glow,
 That laughs on earth and all below!
 We wedded secret—there was need—
 Differing in country and in creed;
 And, when to Mortham's tower she came,
 We mentioned not her race and name,
 Until thy sire, who fought afar,
 Should turn him home from foreign war,
 On whose kind influence we relied
 To soothe her father's ire and pride.
 Few months we lived retired, unknown,
 To all but one dear friend alone,
 One darling friend—I spare his shame,
 I will not write the villain's name!
 My trespasses I might forget,
 And sue in vengeance for the debt
 Due by a brother worm to me,
 Ungrateful to God's clemency,
 That spared me penitential time,
 Nor cut me off amid my crime.—

xxi. "A kindly smile to all she lent,
 But on her husband's friend 'twas bent
 So kind, that from its harmless glee,
 The wretch misconstrued villainy.
 Repulsed in his presumptuous love,

A 'vengeful snare the traitor wove.
 Alone we sat—the flask had flow'd,
 My blood with heat unwonted glow'd,
 When through the alley'd walk we spied
 With hurried step my Edith glide,
 Cowering beneath the verdant screen,
 As one unwilling to be seen.
 Words cannot paint the fiendish smile,
 That curl'd the traitor's cheek the while!
 Fiercely I question'd of the cause;
 He made a cold and artful pause,
 Then pray'd it might not chafe my mood—
 'There was a gallant in the wood!'
 We had been shooting at the deer;
 My cross-bow (evil chance!) was near:
 That ready weapon of my wrath
 I caught, and, hasting up the path,
 In the yew grove my wife I found,
 A stranger's arms her neck had bound!
 I mark'd his heart—the bow I drew—
 I loosed the shaft—'twas more than true!
 I found my Edith's dying charms
 Lock'd in her murder'd brother's arms!
 He came in secret to enquire
 Her state, and reconcile her sire.

xxii. "All fled my rage—the villain first,
 Whose craft my jealousy had nursed;
 He sought in far and foreign clime
 To 'scape the vengeance of his crime.
 The manner of the slaughter done
 Was known to few, my guilt to none;
 Some tale my faithful steward framed—
 I know not what—of shaft mis-aim'd;
 And even from those the act who knew,
 He hid the hand from which it flew.
 Untouch'd by human laws I stood,
 But GOD had heard the cry of blood!
 There is a blank upon my mind,
 A fearful vision ill-defined,
 Of raving till my flesh was torn,
 Of dungeon-bolts and fetters worn—
 And when I waked to woe more mild,
 And question'd of my infant child—
 (Have I not written, that she bare
 A boy, like summer morning fair?)—
 With looks confused my menials tell
 That armed men in Mortham dell
 Beset the nurse's evening way,

And bore her, with her charge, away.
 My faithless friend, and none but he,
 Could profit by this villainy;
 Him then, I sought, with purpose dread
 Of treble vengeance on his head!
 He 'scaped me—but my bosom's wound
 Some faint relief from wandering found;
 And over distant land and sea
 I bore my load of misery.

xxiii. " 'Twas then that fate my footsteps led
 Among a daring crew and dread,
 With whom full oft my hated life
 I ventured in such desperate strife,
 That even my fierce associates saw
 My frantic deeds with doubt and awe.
 Much then I learn'd, and much can show,
 Of human guilt and human woe,
 Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings, known
 A wretch, whose sorrows match'd my own!—
 It chanced, that after battle fray,
 Upon the bloody field we lay;
 The yellow moon her lustre shed
 Upon the wounded and the dead,
 While, sense in toil and wassail drown'd,
 My ruffian comrades slept around,
 There came a voice—its silver tone
 Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
 ' Ah, wretch! ' it said, ' what makest thou here,
 While unavenged my bloody bier,
 While unprotected lives mine heir,
 Without a father's name and care? '

xxiv. " I heard—obey'd—and homeward drew;
 The fiercest of our desperate crew
 I brought at time of need to aid
 My purposed vengeance, long delay'd.
 But, humble be my thanks to Heaven,
 That better hopes and thoughts has given,
 And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught,
 Mercy by mercy must be bought!—
 Let me in misery rejoice—
 I've seen his face—I've heard his voice—
 I claim'd of him my only child—
 As he disown'd the theft, he smiled!
 That very calm and callous look,
 That fiendish sneer his visage took,
 As when he said, in scornful mood,
 ' There is a gallant in the wood! '—

I did not slay him as he stood—
All praise be to my Maker given!
Long suffrance is one path to heaven.”

xxv. Thus far the woful tale was heard,
When something in the thicket stirr'd.
Up Redmond sprung; the villain Guy,
(For he it was that lurk'd so nigh,)
Drew back—he durst not cross his steel
A moment's space with brave O'Neale,
For all the treasured gold that rests
In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
Redmond resumed his seat;—he said,
Some roe was rustling in the shade.
Bertram laugh'd grimly when he saw
His timorous comrade backward draw;
“A trusty mate art thou, to fear
A single arm, and aid so near!
Yet have I seen thee mark a deer.
Give me thy carabine—I'll show
An art that thou wilt gladly know,
How thou mayst safely quell a foe.”

xxvi. On hands and knees fierce Bertram drew
The spreading birch and hazels through,
Till he had Redmond full in view;
The gun he levell'd—Mark like this
Was Bertram never known to miss,
When fair opposed to aim there sate
An object of his mortal hate.
That day young Redmond's death had seen,
But twice Matilda came between
The carabine and Redmond's breast,
Just ere the spring his finger press'd.
A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
But yet his fell design forbore:
“It ne'er,” he mutter'd, “shall be said,
That thus I scath'd thee, haughty maid!”
Then moved to seek more open aim,
When to his side Guy Denzil came:
“Bertram, forbear!—we are undone
For ever, if thou fire the gun.
By all the fiends, an armed force
Descends the dell, of foot and horse!
We perish if they hear a shot—
Madman! we have a safer plot—
Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear thee back!
Behold, down yonder hollow track,
The warlike leader of the band

Comes, with his broadsword in his hand."
 Bertram look'd up; he saw, he knew
 That Denzil's fears had counsell'd true,
 Then cursed his fortune and withdrew,
 Threaded the woodlands undescried,
 And gain'd the cave on Greta side.

xxvii. They whom dark Bertram, in his wrath,
 Doom'd to captivity or death,
 Their thoughts to one sad subject lent,
 Saw not nor heard the ambushment.
 Heedless and unconcern'd they sate,
 While on the very verge of fate;
 Heedless and unconcern'd remain'd,
 When Heaven the murderer's arm restrain'd;
 As ships drift darkling down the tide,
 Nor see the shelves o'er which they glide.
 Uninterrupted thus they heard
 What Mortham's closing tale declared.
 He spoke of wealth as of a load,
 By Fortune on a wretch bestow'd,
 In bitter mockery of hate,
 His cureless woes to aggravate;
 But yet he pray'd Matilda's care
 Might save that treasure for his heir—
 His Edith's son—for still he raved
 As confident his life was saved;
 In frequent vision, he averr'd,
 He saw his face, his voice he heard;
 Then argued calm—had murder been,
 The blood, the corpses, had been seen;
 Some had pretended, too, to mark
 On Windermere a stranger bark,
 Whose crew, with jealous care, yet mild,
 Guarded a female and a child.
 While these faint proofs he told and press'd,
 Hope seem'd to kindle in his breast;
 Though inconsistent, vague, and vain,
 It warp'd his judgment, and his brain.

xxviii. These solemn words his story close:—
 "Heaven witness for me, that I chose
 My part in this sad civil fight,
 Moved by no cause but England's right.
 My country's groans have bid me draw
 My sword for gospel and for law;—
 These righted, I fling arms aside,
 And seek my son through Europe wide.
 My wealth, on which a kinsman nigh

Already casts a grasping eye,
 With thee may unsuspected lie.
 When of my death Matilda hears,
 Let her retain her trust three years;
 If none, from me, the treasure claim,
 Perish'd is Mortham's race and name.
 Then let it leave her generous hand,
 And flow in bounty o'er the land;
 Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
 Rebuild the peasant's ruin'd cot;
 So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
 Shall mitigate domestic war."

xxix. The generous youths, who well had known
 Of Mortham's mind the powerful tone,
 To that high mind, by sorrow swerved,
 Gave sympathy his woes deserved;
 But Wilfrid chief, who saw reveal'd
 Why Mortham wish'd his life conceal'd,
 In secret, doubtless, to pursue
 The schemes his wilder'd fancy drew.
 Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell,
 That she would share her father's cell,
 His partner of captivity,
 Where'er his prison-house should be;
 Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-hall,
 Dismantled, and forsook by all,
 Open to rapine and to stealth,
 Had now no safeguard for the wealth
 Intrusted by her kinsman kind,
 And for such noble use design'd.
 "Was Barnard Castle then her choice,"
 Wilfrid enquired with hasty voice,
 "Since there the victor's laws ordain,
 Her father must a space remain?"
 A flutter'd hope his accents shook,
 A flutter'd joy was in his look.
 Matilda hasten'd to reply,
 For anger flash'd in Redmond's eye;—
 "Duty," she said, with gentle grace,
 "Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of place;
 Else had I for my sire assign'd
 Prison less galling to his mind,
 Than that his wild-wood haunts which sees
 And hears the murmur of the Tees,
 Recalling thus, with every glance,
 What captive's sorrow can enhance;
 But where those woes are highest, there
 Needs Rokeby most his daughter's care."

xxx. He felt the kindly check she gave,
 And stood abash'd—then answer'd grave:—
 "I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
 Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes to aid.
 I have beneath mine own command,
 So wills my sire, a gallant band,
 And well could send some horseman wight
 To bear the treasure forth by night,
 And so bestow it as you deem
 In these ill days may safest seem."—
 "Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks," she said:
 "O, be it not one day delay'd!
 And, more, thy sister-friend to aid,
 Be thou thyself content to hold,
 In thine own keeping, Mortham's gold,
 Safest with thee."—While thus she spoke,
 Arm'd soldiers on their converse broke,
 The same of whose approach afraid,
 The ruffians left their ambuscade.
 Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
 Then look'd around as for a foe.
 "What mean'st thou, friend," young Wycliffe said,
 "Why thus in arms beset the glade?"—
 "That would I gladly learn from you;
 For up my squadron as I drew,
 To exercise our martial game
 Upon the moor of Barningham,
 A stranger told you were waylaid,
 Surrounded, and to death betray'd.
 He had a leader's voice, I ween,
 A falcon glance, a warrior's mien.
 He bade me bring you instant aid;
 I doubted not, and I obey'd."

xxxI. Wilfrid changed colour, and, amazed,
 Turn'd short, and on the speaker gazed;
 While Redmond every thicket round
 Track'd earnest as a questing hound,
 And Denzil's carabine he found;
 Sure evidence, by which they knew
 The warning was as kind as true.
 Wisest it seem'd, with cautious speed
 To leave the dell. It was agreed,
 That Redmond, with Matilda fair,
 And fitting guard, should home repair;
 At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
 With a strong band, his sister-friend,
 To bear with her from Rokeby's bowers
 To Barnard Castle's lofty towers,

Secret and safe the banded chests,
In which the wealth of Mortham rests.
This hasty purpose fix'd, they part,
Each with a grieved and anxious heart.

CANTO FIFTH

- I. The sultry summer day is done,
The western hills have hid the sun.
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.
Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
To those that gaze from Toller-hill;
Distant and high, the tower of Bowes
Like steel upon the anvil glows;
And Stanmore's ridge, behind that lay,
Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold array'd,
Streaks yet a while the closing shade,
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus aged men, full loth and slow,
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er,
Till Memory lends her light no more.
- II. The eve, that slow on upland fades,
Has darker closed on Rokeby's glades,
Where, sunk within their banks profound,
Her guardian streams to meeting wound.
The stately oaks, whose sombre frown
Of noontide made a twilight brown,
Impervious now to fainter light,
Of twilight make an early night.
Hoarse into middle air arose
The vespers of the roosting crows,
And with congenial murmurs seem
To wake the Genii of the stream;
For louder clamour'd Greta's tide,
And Tees in deeper voice replied.
And fitful waked the evening wind,
Fitful in sighs its breath resign'd.
Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul
Felt in the scene a soft control,
With lighter footstep press'd the ground,
And often paused to look around;
And, though his path was to his love,

Could not but linger in the grove,
To drink the thrilling interest dear,
Of awful pleasure check'd by fear.
Such inconsistent moods have we,
Even when our passions strike the key.

III. Now, through the wood's dark mazes past,
The opening lawn he reach'd at last,
Where, silver'd by the moonlight ray,
The ancient Hall before him lay.
Those martial terrors long were fled,
That frown'd of old around its head:
The battlements, the turrets grey,
Seem'd half abandon'd to decay;
On barbican and keep of stone
Stern Time the foeman's work had done.
Where banners the invader braved,
The harebell now and wallflower waved;
In the rude guard-room, where of yore
Their weary hours the warders wore,
Now, while the cheerful fagots blaze,
On the paved floor the spindle plays;
The flanking guns dismounted lie,
The moat is ruinous and dry,
The grim portcullis gone—and all
The fortress turn'd to peaceful Hall.

IV. But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
Show'd danger's day revived again;
The court-yard wall show'd marks of care,
The fall'n defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might withstand
The insult of marauding band.
The beams once more were taught to bear
The trembling drawbridge into air,
And not, till question'd o'er and o'er,
For Wilfrid oped the jealous door,
And when he entered, bolt and bar
Resumed their place with sullen jar;
Then, as he cross'd the vaulted porch,
The old grey porter raised his torch,
And view'd him o'er, from foot to head,
Ere to the hall his steps he led.
That huge old hall, of knightly state,
Dismantled seem'd and desolate.
The moon through transom-shafts of stone,
Which cross'd the latticed oriels, shone,
And by the mournful light she gave,
The Gothic vault seem'd funeral cave.

Pennon and banner waved no more
 O'er beams of stag and tusks of boar,
 Nor glimmering arms were marshall'd seen,
 To glance those silvan spoils between.
 Those arms, those ensigns, borne away,
 Accomplish'd Rokeby's brave array,
 But all were lost on Marston's day!
 Yet here and there the moonbeams fall
 Where armour yet adorns the wall,
 Cumbersome of size, uncouth to sight,
 And useless in the modern fight!
 Like veteran relic of the wars,
 Known only by neglected scars.

- v. Matilda soon to greet him came,
 And bade them light the evening flame;
 Said, all for parting was prepared,
 And tarried but for Wilfrid's guard.
 But then, reluctant to unfold
 His father's avarice of gold,
 He hinted, that lest jealous eye
 Should on their precious burden pry,
 He judged it best the castle gate
 To enter when the night wore late;
 And therefore he had left command
 With those he trusted of his band,
 That they should be at Rokeby met,
 What time the midnight-watch was set.
 Now Redmond came, whose anxious care
 Till then was busied to prepare
 All needful, meetly to arrange
 The mansion for its mournful change.
 With Wilfrid's care and kindness pleased,
 His cold unready hand he seized,
 And press'd it, till his kindly strain
 The gentle youth return'd again.
 Seem'd as between them this was said,
 "A while let jealousy be dead;
 And let our contest be, whose care
 Shall best assist this helpless fair."
- vi. There was no speech the truce to bind,
 It was a compact of the mind,—
 A generous thought, at once impress'd
 On either rival's generous breast.
 Matilda well the secret took,
 From sudden change of mien and look;
 And—for not small had been her fear
 Of jealous ire and danger near—

Felt, even in her dejected state,
 A joy beyond the reach of fate.
 They closed beside the chimney's blaze,
 And talk'd, and hoped for happier days,
 And lent their spirits' rising glow
 A while to gild impending woe;—
 High privilege of youthful time,
 Worth all the pleasures of our prime!
 The bickering fagot sparkled bright,
 And gave the scene of love to sight,
 Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively glow,
 Play'd on Matilda's neck of snow,
 Her nut-brown curls and forehead high,
 And laugh'd in Redmond's azure eye.
 Two lovers by the maiden sate,
 Without a glance of jealous hate;
 The maid her lovers sat between,
 With open brow and equal mien;—
 It is a sight but rarely spied,
 Thanks to man's wrath and woman's pride.

- VII. While thus in peaceful guise they sate,
 A knock alarm'd the outer gate,
 And ere the tardy porter stirr'd,
 The tinkling of a harp was heard.
 A manly voice of mellow swell,
 Bore burden to the music well.

SONG

"Summer eve is gone and past,
 Summer dew is falling fast;
 I have wander'd all the day,
 Do not bid me farther stray!
 Gentle hearts, of gentle kin,
 Take the wandering harper in!"

But the stern porter answer gave,
 With "Get thee hence, thou strolling knave.
 The king wants soldiers; war, I trow,
 Were meeter trade for such as thou."
 At this unkind reproof, again
 Answer'd the ready Minstrel's strain.

SONG RESUMED

"Bid not me, in battle-field,
 Buckler lift, or broadsword wield!
 All my strength and all my art
 Is to touch the gentle heart,
 With the wizard notes that ring
 From the peaceful minstrel-string."—

The porter, all unmoved, replied,—
 “Depart in peace, with Heaven to guide,
 If longer by the gate thou dwell,
 Trust me, thou shalt not part so well.”

- VIII. With somewhat of appealing look,
 The harper's part young Wilfrid took:
 “These notes so wild and ready thrill,
 They show no vulgar minstrel's skill;
 Hard were his task to seek a home
 More distant, since the night is come;
 And for his faith I dare engage—
 Your Harpool's blood is sour'd by age;
 His gate, once readily display'd,
 To greet the friend, the poor to aid,
 Now even to me, though known of old,
 Did but reluctantly unfold.”—
 “O blame not, as poor Harpool's crime,
 An evil of this evil time.
 He deems dependent on his care
 The safety of his patron's heir,
 Nor judges meet to ope the tower
 To guest unknown at parting hour,
 Urging his duty to excess
 Of rough and stubborn faithfulness.
 For this poor harper, I would fain
 He may relax:—Hark to his strain!”—

SONG RESUMED

- IX. “I have song of war for knight,
 Lay of love for lady bright,
 Fairy tale to lull the heir,
 Goblin grim the maids to scare.
 Dark the night, and long till day,
 Do not bid me farther stray!

“Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
 I can count them name by name;
 Legends of their line there be,
 Known to few, but known to me;
 If you honour Rokeby's kin,
 Take the wandering harper in!

“Rokeby's lords had fair regard
 For the harp, and for the bard;
 Baron's race throve never well,
 Where the curse of minstrel fell.
 If you love that noble kin,
 Take the weary harper in!”—

"Hark! Harpool parleys—there is hope,"
 Said Redmond, "that the gate will ope."—
 —"For all thy brag and boast, I trow,
 Nought know'st thou of the Felon Sow,"
 Quoth Harpool, "nor how Greta-side
 She roam'd, and Rokeby forest wide;
 Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the beast
 To Richmond's friars to make a feast.
 Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale
 Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,
 That well could strike with sword amain,
 And of the valiant son of Spain,
 Friar Middleton, and blithe Sir Ralph;
 There were a jest to make us laugh!
 If thou canst tell it, in yon shed
 Thou'st won thy supper and thy bed."

- x. Matilda smiled; "Cold hope," said she,
 "From Harpool's love of minstrelsy!
 But, for this harper, may we dare,
 Redmond, to mend his couch and fare?"—
 "O, ask me not!—At minstrel-string
 My heart from infancy would spring;
 Nor can I hear its simplest strain,
 But it brings Erin's dream again;
 When placed by Owen Lysagh's knee,
 (The Filea of O'Neale was he,
 A blind and bearded man, whose eld
 Was sacred as a prophet's held,)
 I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,
 With aspects shaggy, wild, and stern,
 Enchanted by the master's lay,
 Linger around the livelong day,
 Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
 To love, to grief, to ecstasy,
 And feel each varied change of soul
 Obedient to the bard's control.—
 Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
 Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more;
 Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
 Tell maiden's love, or hero's praise!
 The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
 Centre of hospitable mirth;
 All undistinguish'd in the glade,
 My sires' glad home is prostrate laid,
 Their vassals wander wide and far,
 Serve foreign lords in distant war,
 And now the stranger's sons enjoy
 The lovely woods of Clandeboy!"

He spoke, and proudly turn'd aside,
The starting tear to dry and hide.

- xI. Matilda's dark and soften'd eye
Was glistening ere O'Neale's was dry.
Her hand upon his arm she laid,—
"It is the will of heaven," she said.
"And think'st thou, Redmond, I can part
From this loved home with lightsome heart,
Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
Even from my infancy was dear?
For in this calm domestic bound
Were all Matilda's pleasures found.
That hearth, my sire was wont to grace,
Full soon may be a stranger's place;
This hall, in which a child I play'd,
Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly laid,
The bramble and the thorn may braid;
Or, pass'd for aye from me and mine,
It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.
Yet is this consolation given,
My Redmond,—'tis the will of heaven."
Her word, her action, and her phrase,
Were kindly as in early days;
For cold reserve had lost its power,
In sorrow's sympathetic hour.
Young Redmond dared not trust his voice;
But rather had it been his choice
To share that melancholy hour,
Than, arm'd with all a chieftain's power,
In full possession to enjoy
Slieve-Donard wide, and Clandeboy.

- xII. The blood left Wilfrid's ashen cheek;
Matilda sees, and hastes to speak.—
"Happy in friendship's ready aid,
Let all my murmurs here be staid!
And Rokeby's Maiden will not part
From Rokeby's hall with moody heart.
This night at least, for Rokeby's fame,
The hospitable hearth shall flame,
And, ere its native heir retire,
Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
While this poor harper, by the blaze,
Recounts the tale of other days.
Bid Harpool ope the door with speed,
Admit him, and relieve each need.—
Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt thou try
Thy minstrel skill?—Nay, no reply—

And look not sad!—I guess thy thought,
 Thy verse with laurels would be bought;
 And poor Matilda, landless now,
 Has not a garland for thy brow.
 True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's glades,
 Nor wander more in Greta shades;
 But sure, no rigid jailer, thou
 Wilt a short prison-walk allow,
 Where summer flowers grow wild at will,
 On Marwood-chase and Toller Hill;
 Then holly green and lily gay
 Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay."
 The mournful youth, a space aside,
 To tune Matilda's harp applied;
 And then a low sad descant rung,
 As prelude to the lay he sung.

THE CYPRESS WREATH

XIII. O, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!
 Too lively glow the lilies light,
 The varnish'd holly's all too bright,
 The May-flower and the eglantine
 May shade a brow less sad than mine;
 But, Lady, weave no wreath for me,
 Or weave it of the cypress-tree!

Let dimpled Mirth his temples twine
 With tendrils of the laughing vine;
 The manly oak, the pensive yew,
 To patriot and to sage be due;
 The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
 But that Matilda will not give;
 Then, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!

Let merry England proudly rear
 Her blended roses, bought so dear;
 Let Albin bind her bonnet blue
 With heath and harebell dipp'd in dew;
 On favour'd Erin's crest be seen
 The flower she loves of emerald green—
 But, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree.

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
 The ivy meet for minstrel's hair;
 And, while his crown of laurel-leaves,
 With bloody hand the victor weaves,

Let the loud trump his triumph tell;
But when you hear the passing-bell,
Then, Lady, twine a wreath for me,
And twine it of the cypress-tree.

Yes! twine for me the cypress bough;
But, O Matilda, twine not now!
Stay till a few brief months are past,
And I have look'd and loved my last!
When villagers my shroud bestrew
With panzies, rosemary, and rue,—
Then, Lady, weave a wreath for me,
And weave it of the cypress-tree.

- xiv. O'Neale observed the starting tear,
And spoke with kind and blithesome cheer—
"No, noble Wilfrid! ere the day
When mourns the land thy silent lay,
Shall many a wreath be freely wove
By hand of friendship and of love.
I would not wish that rigid Fate
Had doom'd thee to a captive's state,
Whose hands are bound by honour's law,
Who wears a sword he must not draw;
But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we ride,
On prancing steeds, like harpers old,
Bound for the halls of barons bold,
Each lover of the lyre we'd seek,
From Michael's Mount to Skiddaw's Peak,
Survey wild Albin's mountain strand,
And roam green Erin's lovely land,
While thou the gentler souls should move,
With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
Would sing of war and warriors slain.
Old England's bards were vanquish'd then,
And Scotland's vaunted Hawthornden,
And, silenced on Iernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp should charm no more!"
In lively mood he spoke, to wile
From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek a smile.

- xv. "But," said Matilda, "ere thy name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined fame,
Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
Thy brother-minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household, too, attend,
Each in his rank a humble friend;

I know their faithful hearts will grieve,
 When their poor Mistress takes her leave;
 So let the horn and beaker flow
 To mitigate their parting woe."
 The harper came;—in youth's first prime
 Himself; in mode of olden time
 His garb was fashion'd, to express
 The ancient English minstrel's dress,
 A seemly gown of Kendal green,
 With gorget closed of silver sheen;
 His harp in silken scarf was slung,
 And by his side an anlace hung.
 It seem'd some masquer's quaint array,
 For revel or for holiday.

xvi. He made obeisance with a free
 Yet studied air of courtesy.
 Each look and accent, framed to please,
 Seem'd to affect a playful ease;
 His face was of that doubtful kind,
 That wins the eye, but not the mind;
 Yet harsh it seem'd to deem amiss
 Of brow so young and smooth as this.
 His was the subtle look and sly,
 That, spying all, seems nought to spy;
 Round all the group his glances stole,
 Unmark'd themselves, to mark the whole.
 Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
 Nor could the eye of Redmond brook.
 To the suspicious, or the old,
 Subtile and dangerous and bold
 Had seem'd this self-invited guest;
 But young our lovers,—and the rest,
 Wrapt in their sorrow and their fear
 At parting of their Mistress dear,
 Tear-blinded to the Castle-hall,
 Came as to bear her funeral pall.

xvii. All that expression base was gone,
 When waked the guest his minstrel tone;
 It fled at inspiration's call,
 As erst the demon fled from Saul.
 More noble glance he cast around,
 More free-drawn breath inspired the sound,
 His pulse beat bolder and more high,
 In all the pride of minstrelsy!
 Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
 Sunk with the lay that bade it soar!
 His soul resumed, with habit's chain,

Its vices wild and follies vain,
 And gave the talent, with him born,
 To be a common curse and scorn.
 Such was the youth whom Rokeby's Maid,
 With condescending kindness, pray'd
 Here to renew the strains she loved,
 At distance heard and well approved.

SONG

The Harp

xviii. I was a wild and wayward boy,
 My childhood scorn'd each childish toy,
 Retired from all, reserved and coy,
 To musing prone,
 I woo'd my solitary joy,
 My Harp alone.

My youth, with bold Ambition's mood,
 Despised the humble stream and wood,
 Where my poor father's cottage stood,
 To fame unknown;—
 What should my soaring views make good?
 My Harp alone!

Love came with all his frantic fire,
 And wild romance of vain desire:
 The baron's daughter heard my lyre,
 And praised the tone;—
 What could presumptuous hope inspire?
 My Harp alone!

At manhood's touch the bubble burst,
 And manhood's pride the vision curst,
 And all that had my folly nursed
 Love's sway to own;
 Yet spared the spell that lull'd me first,
 My Harp alone!

Woe came with war, and want with woe;
 And it was mine to undergo
 Each outrage of the rebel foe:—
 Can aught atone
 My fields laid waste, my cot laid low?
 My Harp alone!

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
 Have rued of penury the smart,

Have felt of love the venom'd dart,
 When hope was flown;
 Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
 My Harp alone!

Then over mountain, moor, and hill,
 My faithful Harp, I'll bear thee still;
 And when this life of want and ill
 Is well nigh gone,
 Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
 My Harp alone!

- xix. "A pleasing lay!" Matilda said;
 But Harpool shook his old grey head,
 And took his baton and his torch,
 To seek his guard-room in the porch.
 Edmund observed; with sudden change,
 Among the strings his fingers range,
 Until they waked a bolder glee
 Of military melody;
 Then paused amid the martial sound,
 And look'd with well-feign'd fear around;—
 "None to this noble house belong,"
 He said, "that would a Minstrel wrong,
 Whose fate has been, through good and ill,
 To love his Royal Master still;
 And with your honour'd leave, would fain
 Rejoice you with a loyal strain."
 Then, as assured by sign and look,
 The warlike tone again he took;
 And Harpool stopp'd, and turn'd to hear
 A ditty of the Cavalier.

SONG

The Cavalier

- xx. While the dawn on the mountain was misty and grey,
 My true love has mounted his steed and away
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down;
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the
 Crown!

He has doff'd the silk doublet the breastplate to bear,
 He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long flowing hair,
 From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs
 down,—
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the
 Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he
draws,
Her King is his leader, her Church is his cause;
His watchword is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the Gallant that strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The roundheaded rebels of Westminster Hall;
But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town,
That the spears of the North have encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's Montrose!
Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and
Brown,
With the Barons of England, that fight for the Crown!

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
Be his banner unconquer'd, resistless his spear,
Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown,
In a pledge to fair England, her Church, and her
Crown.

xxi. "Alas!" Matilda said, "that strain,
Good harper, now is heard in vain.
The time has been, at such a sound,
When Rokeby's vassals gather'd round,
An hundred manly hearts would bound;
But now the stirring verse we hear,
Like trump in dying soldier's ear!
Listless and sad the notes we own,
The power to answer them is flown.
Yet not without his meet applause,
Be he that sings the rightful cause,
Even when the crisis of its fate
To human eye seems desperate.
While Rokeby's Heir such power retains,
Let this slight guerdon pay thy pains:—
And lend thy harp; I fain would try;
If my poor skill can aught supply,
Ere yet I leave my fathers' hall,
To mourn the cause in which we fall."

xxii. The harper, with a downcast look,
And trembling hand, her bounty took.—
As yet, the conscious pride of art
Had steel'd him in his treacherous part;
A powerful spring, of force unguess'd,
That hath each gentler mood suppress'd,

And reign'd in many a human breast;
 From his that plans the red campaign,
 To his that wastes the woodland reign.
 The failing wing, the blood-shot eye,—
 The sportsman marks with apathy,
 Each feeling of his victim's ill
 Drown'd in his own successful skill.
 The veteran, too, who now no more
 Aspires to head the battle's roar,
 Loves still the triumph of his art,
 And traces on the pencill'd chart
 Some stern invader's destined way,
 Through blood and ruin, to his prey;
 Patriots to death, and towns to flame,
 He dooms, to raise another's name,
 And shares the guilt, though not the fame.
 What pays him for his span of time
 Spent in premeditating crime?
 What against pity arms his heart?—
 It is the conscious pride of art.

- XXIII. But principles in Edmund's mind
 Were baseless, vague, and undefined.
 His soul, like bark with rudder lost,
 On Passion's changeful tide was tost;
 Nor Vice nor Virtue had the power
 Beyond the impression of the hour;
 And, O! when Passion rules, how rare
 The hours that fall to Virtue's share!
 Yet now she roused her—for the pride,
 That lack of sterner guilt supplied,
 Could scarce support him when arose
 The lay that mourned Matilda's woes.

SONG

The Farewell

The sound of Rokeby's woods I hear,
 They mingle with the song:
 Dark Greta's voice is in mine ear,
 I must not hear them long.
 From every loved and native haunt
 The native Heir must stray,
 And, like a ghost whom sunbeams daunt,
 Must part before the day.

Soon from the halls my fathers rear'd,
 Their scutcheons may descend,
 A line so long beloved and fear'd
 May soon obscurely end.

No longer here Matilda's tone
 Shall bid those echoes swell;
 Yet shall they hear her proudly own
 The cause in which we fell.

The Lady paused, and then again
 Resumed the lay in loftier strain.

xxiv. Let our halls and towers decay,
 Be our name and line forgot,
 Lands and manors pass away,—
 We but share our Monarch's lot.
 If no more our annals show
 Battles won and banners taken,
 Still in death, defeat, and woe,
 Ours be loyalty unshaken!

Constant still in danger's hour,
 Princes own'd our fathers' aid;
 Lands and honours, wealth and power,
 Well their loyalty repaid.
 Perish wealth, and power, and pride!
 Mortal boons by mortals given;
 But let Constancy abide,—
 Constancy's the gift of Heaven.

xxv. While thus Matilda's lay was heard,
 A thousand thoughts in Edmund stirr'd.
 In peasant life he might have known
 As fair a face, as sweet a tone;
 But village notes could ne'er supply
 That rich and varied melody;
 And ne'er in cottage-maid was seen
 The easy dignity of mien,
 Claiming respect, yet waiving state,
 That marks the daughters of the great.
 Yet not, perchance, had these alone
 His scheme of purposed guilt o'erthrown;
 But while her energy of mind
 Superior rose to griefs combined,
 Lending its kindling to her eye,
 Giving her form new majesty,—
 To Edmund's thought Matilda seem'd
 The very object he had dream'd;
 When, long ere guilt his soul had known,
 In Winston bowers he mused alone,
 Taxing his fancy to combine
 The face, the air, the voice divine,
 Of princess fair, by cruel fate

Reft of her honours, power, and state,
Till to her rightful realm restored
By destined hero's conquering sword.

- xxvi. "Such was my vision!" Edmund thought;
"And have I, then, the ruin wrought
Of such a maid, that fancy ne'er
In fairest vision form'd her peer?
Was it my hand that could uncloset
The postern to her ruthless foes?
Foes, lost to honour, law, and faith,
Their kindest mercy sudden death!
Have I done this? I! who have sworn,
That if the globe such angel bore,
I would have traced its circle broad,
To kiss the ground on which she trode!—
And now—O! would that earth would rive,
And close upon me while alive!—
Is there no hope? Is all then lost?—
Bertram's already on his post!
Even now, beside the Hall's arch'd door,
I saw his shadow cross the floor!
He was to wait my signal strain—
A little respite thus we gain:
By what I heard the menials say,
Young Wycliffe's troop are on their way—
Alarm precipitates the crime!
My harp must wear away the time."—
And then, in accents faint and low,
He falter'd forth a tale of woe.

BALLAD

- xxvii. "And whither would you lead me, then?"
Quoth the Friar of orders grey;
And the Ruffians twain replied again,
"By a dying woman to pray."—
"I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
A sight bodes little harm,
A lady as a lily bright,
With an infant on her arm."—
"Then do thine office, Friar grey,
And see thou shrive her free?
Else shall the sprite, that parts to-night,
Fling all its guilt on thee."
"Let mass be said, and trentals read,
When thou'rt to convent gone,
And bid the bell of St. Benedict
Toll out its deepest tone."

The shrift is done, the Friar is gone,
 Blindfolded as he came—
 Next morning, all in Littlecot Hall
 Were weeping for their dame.

Wild Darrell is an alter'd man,
 The village crones can tell;
 He looks pale as clay, and strives to pray,
 If he hears the convent bell.

If prince or peer cross Darrell's way,
 He'll beard him in his pride—
 If he meet a Friar of orders grey,
 He droops and turns aside.

xxviii. "Harper! methinks thy magic lays,"
 Matilda said, "can goblins raise!
 Wellnigh my fancy can discern,
 Near the dark porch, a visage stern;
 E'en now, in yonder shadowy nook,
 I see it!—Redmond, Wilfrid, look!—
 A human form distinct and clear—
 God, for thy mercy!—It draws near!"
 She saw too true. Stride after stride,
 The centre of that chamber wide
 Fierce Bertram gain'd; then made a stand,
 And, proudly waving with his hand,
 Thunder'd—"Be still, upon your lives!—
 He bleeds who speaks, he dies who strives."
 Behind their chief, the robber crew
 Forth from the darken'd portal drew
 In silence—save that echo dread
 Return'd their heavy measured tread.
 The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
 Their arms to gleam, their plumes to wave;
 File after file in order pass,
 Like forms on Banquo's mystic glass.
 Then, halting at their leader's sign,
 At once they form'd and curv'd their line,
 Hemming within its crescent drear
 Their victims, like a herd of deer.
 Another sign, and to the aim
 Levell'd at once their muskets came,
 As waiting but their chieftain's word,
 To make their fatal volley heard.

xxix. Back in a heap the menials drew;
 Yet, even in mortal terror, true,
 Their pale and startled group oppose

Between Matilda and the foes.
 "O, haste thee, Wilfrid!" Redmond cried;
 "Undo that wicket by thy side!
 Bear hence Matilda—gain the wood—
 The pass may be a while made good—
 Thy band, ere this, must sure be nigh—
 O speak not—dally not—but fly!"
 While yet the crowd their motions hide,
 Through the low wicket door they glide.
 Through vaulted passages they wind,
 In Gothic intricacy twined;
 Wilfrid half led, and half he bore,
 Matilda to the postern-door,
 And safe beneath the forest tree,
 The Lady stands at liberty.
 The moonbeams, the fresh gale's caress,
 Renew'd suspended consciousness;—
 "Where's Redmond?" eagerly she cries:
 "Thou answer'st not—he dies! he dies!
 And thou hast left him, all bereft
 Of mortal aid—with murderers left!
 I know it well—he would not yield
 His sword to man—his doom is seal'd!
 For my scorn'd life, which thou hast bought
 At price of his, I thank thee not."

xxx. The unjust reproach, the angry look,
 The heart of Wilfrid could not brook.
 "Lady," he said, "my band so near,
 In safety thou mayst rest thee here.
 For Redmond's death thou shalt not mourn,
 If mine can buy his safe return."
 He turn'd away—his heart throbb'd high,
 The tear was bursting from his eye;
 The sense of her injustice press'd
 Upon the Maid's distracted breast,—
 "Stay, Wilfrid, stay! all aid is vain!"
 He heard, but turn'd him not again;
 He reaches now the postern-door,
 Now enters—and is seen no more.

xxxI. With all the agony that e'er
 Was gendered 'twixt suspense and fear,
 She watch'd the line of windows tall,
 Whose Gothic lattice lights the Hall,
 Distinguish'd by the paly red
 The lamps in dim reflection shed,
 While all beside in wan moonlight
 Each grated casement glimmer'd white.

No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
It is a deep and midnight still.
Who look'd upon the scene, had guess'd
All in the Castle were at rest:
When sudden on the windows shone
A lightning flash, just seen and gone!
A shot is heard—Again the flame
Flash'd thick and fast—a volley came!
Then echo'd wildly, from within,
Of shout and scream the mingled din,
And weapon-clash and maddening cry,
Of those who kill, and those who die!—
As fill'd the Hall with sulphurous smoke,
More red, more dark, the death-flash broke;
And forms were on the lattice cast,
That struck, or struggled, as they past.

xxxii. What sounds upon the midnight wind
Approach so rapidly behind?
It is, it is, the tramp of steeds,
Matilda hears the sound, she speeds,
Seizes upon the leader's rein—
"O, haste to aid, ere aid be vain!
Fly to the postern—gain the Hall!"
From saddle spring the troopers all;
Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
Run wild along the moonlight lea.
But, ere they burst upon the scene,
Full stubborn had the conflict been.
When Bertram mark'd Matilda's flight,
It gave the signal for the fight;
And Rokeby's veterans, seam'd with scars
Of Scotland's and of Erin's wars,
Their momentary panic o'er,
Stood to the arms which then they bore;
(For they were weapon'd, and prepared
Their Mistress on her way to guard.)
Then cheer'd them to the fight O'Neale,
Then peal'd the shot, and clash'd the steel;
The war-smoke soon with sable breath
Darken'd the scene of blood and death,
While on the few defenders close
The Bandits, with redoubled blows,
And, twice driven back, yet fierce and fell
Renew the charge with frantic yell.

xxxiii. Wilfrid has fall'n—but o'er him stood
Young Redmond, soil'd with smoke and blood,
Cheering his mates with heart and hand
Still to make good their desperate stand.

"Up, comrades, up! In Rokeby halls
 Ne'er be it said our courage falls.
 What! faint ye for their savage cry,
 Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt your eye?
 These rafters have return'd a shout
 As loud at Rokeby's wassail rout,
 As thick a smoke these hearths have given
 At Hallow-tide or Christmas-even.
 Stand to it yet! renew the fight,
 For Rokeby's and Matilda's right!
 These slaves! they dare not, hand to hand,
 Bide buffet from a true man's brand."
 Impetuous, active, fierce, and young,
 Upon the advancing foes he sprung.
 Woe to the wretch at whom is bent
 His brandish'd falchion's sheer descent!
 Backward they scatter'd as he came,
 Like wolves before the levin flame,
 When, 'mid their howling conclave driven,
 Hath glanced the thunderbolt of heaven.
 Bertram rush'd on—but Harpool clasp'd
 His knees, although in death he gasp'd,
 His falling corpse before him flung,
 And round the trammell'd ruffian clung.
 Just then, the soldiers fill'd the dome,
 And, shouting, charged the felons home
 So fiercely, that, in panic dread,
 They broke, they yielded, fell, or fled.
 Bertram's stern voice they heed no more,
 Though heard above the battle's roar;
 While, trampling down the dying man,
 He strove, with volley'd threat and ban,
 In scorn of odds, in fate's despite,
 To rally up the desperate fight.

- xxxiv. Soon murkier clouds the Hall enfold,
 Than e'er from battle-thunders roll'd,
 So dense, the combatants scarce know
 To aim or to avoid the blow.
 Smothering and blindfold grows the fight—
 But soon shall dawn a dismal light!
 Mid cries, and clashing arms, there came
 The hollow sound of rushing flame;
 New horrors on the tumult dire
 Arise—the Castle is on fire!
 Doubtful, if chance had cast the brand,
 Or frantic Bertram's desperate hand.
 Matilda saw—for frequent broke
 From the dim casements gusts of smoke.

Yon tower, which late so clear defined
On the fair hemisphere reclined,
That, pencill'd on its azure pure,
The eye could count each embrazure,
Now, swath'd within the sweeping cloud,
Seems giant-spectre in his shroud ;
Till, from each loop-hole flashing light,
A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
And, gathering to united glare,
Streams high into the midnight air ;
A dismal beacon, far and wide
That waken'd Greta's slumbering side.
Soon all beneath, through gallery long,
And pendant arch, the fire flash'd strong,
Snatching whatever could maintain,
Raise, or extend, its furious reign ;
Startling, with closer cause of dread,
The females who the conflict fled,
And now rush'd forth upon the plain,
Filling the air with clamours vain.

xxxv. But ceased not yet, the Hall within,
The shriek, the shout, the carnage-din,
Till bursting lattice give proof
The flames have caught the rafter'd roof.
What! wait they till its beams amain
Crash on the slayers and the slain ?
The alarm is caught—the drawbridge falls,
The warriors hurry from the walls,
But, by the conflagration's light,
Upon the lawn renew the fight.
Each struggling felon down was hew'd,
Not one could gain the sheltering wood ;
But forth the affrighted harper sprung,
And to Matilda's robe he clung.
Her shriek, entreaty, and command,
Stopp'd the pursuer's lifted hand.
Denzil and he alive were ta'en ;
The rest, save Bertram, all are slain.

xxxvi. And where is Bertram ?—Soaring high
The general flame ascends the sky ;
In gather'd group the soldiers gaze
Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
When, like infernal demon, sent,
Red from his penal element,
To plague and to pollute the air,—
His face all gore, on fire his hair,
Forth from the central mass of smoke
The giant form of Bertram broke!

His brandish'd sword on high he rears,
 Then plunged among opposing spears;
 Round his left arm his mantle truss'd,
 Received and foil'd three lances' thrust;
 Nor these his headlong course withstood,
 Like reeds he snapp'd the tough ash-wood.
 In vain his foes around him clung;
 With matchless force aside he flung
 Their boldest,—as the bull, at bay,
 Tosses the ban-dogs from his way,
 Through forty foes his path he made,
 And safely gain'd the forest glade.

xxxvii. Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
 When from the postern Redmond bore
 Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
 Had in the fatal Hall been left,
 Deserted there by all his train;
 But Redmond saw, and turn'd again.—
 Beneath an oak he laid him down,
 That in the blaze gleam'd ruddy brown,
 And then his mantle's clasp undid;
 Matilda held his drooping head,
 Till, given to breathe the freer air,
 Returning life repaid their care.
 He gazed on them with heavy sigh,—
 "I could have wish'd even thus to die!"
 No more he said—for now with speed
 Each trooper had regain'd his steed;
 The ready palfreys stood array'd,
 For Redmond and for Rokeby's Maid;
 Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
 One leads his charger by the rein.
 But oft Matilda look'd behind,
 As up the Vale of Tees they wind,
 Where far the mansion of her sires
 Beacon'd the dale with midnight fires.
 In gloomy arch above them spread,
 The clouded heaven lower'd bloody red;
 Beneath, in sombre light, the flood
 Appear'd to roll in waves of blood.
 Then, one by one, was heard to fall
 The tower, the donjon-keep, the hall.
 Each rushing down with thunder sound,
 A space the conflagration drown'd;
 Till, gathering strength, again it rose,
 Announced its triumph in its close,
 Shook wide its light the landscape o'er,
 Then sunk—and Rokeby was no more!

CANTO SIXTH

- I. The summer sun, whose early power
Was wont to gild Matilda's bower,
And rouse her with his matin ray
Her duteous orisons to pay,—
That morning sun has three times seen
The flowers unfold on Rokeby green,
But sees no more the slumbers fly
From fair Matilda's hazel eye;
That morning sun has three times broke
On Rokeby's glades of elm and oak,
But, rising from their silvan screen,
Marks no grey turrets glance between.
A shapeless mass lie keep and tower,
That, hissing to the morning shower,
Can but with smouldering vapour pay
The early smile of summer day.
The peasant, to his labour bound,
Pauses to view the blacken'd mound,
Striving, amid the ruin'd space,
Each well-remember'd spot to trace.
That length of frail and fire-scorch'd wall
Once screen'd the hospitable hall;
When yonder broken arch was whole,
'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole;
And where yon tottering columns nod,
The chapel sent the hymn to God.—
So flits the world's uncertain span!
Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
Gives mortal monuments a date
Beyond the power of Time and Fate.
The towers must share the builder's doom,
Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb:
But better boon benignant Heaven
To Faith and Charity has given,
And bids the Christian hope sublime
Transcend the bounds of Fate and Time.
- II. Now the third night of summer came,
Since that which witness'd Rokeby's flame.
On Brignall cliffs and Scargill brake
The owl's homilies awake,
The bittern scream'd from rush and flag,
The raven slumber'd on his crag,
Forth from his den the otter drew,—
Grayling and trout their tyrant knew,

As between reed and sedge he peers,
 With fierce round snout and sharpen'd ears,
 Or, prowling by the moonbeam cool,
 Watches the stream or swims the pool;—
 Perch'd on his wonted eyrie high,
 Sleep seal'd the tercelet's wearied eye,
 That all the day had watch'd so well
 The cushat dart across the dell.
 In dubious beam reflected shone
 That lofty cliff of pale grey stone,
 Beside whose base the secret cave
 To rapine late a refuge gave.
 The crag's wild crest of copse and yew
 On Greta's breast dark shadows threw;
 Shadows that met or shunn'd the sight,
 With every change of fitful light;
 As hope and fear alternate chase
 Our course through life's uncertain race.

- III. Gliding by crag and copsewood green,
 A solitary form was seen
 To trace with stealthy pace the wold,
 Like fox that seeks the midnight fold,
 And pauses oft, and cowers dismay'd,
 At every breath that stirs the shade.
 He passes now the ivy bush,—
 The owl has seen him, and is hush;
 He passes now the dodder'd oak,—
 Ye heard the startled raven croak;
 Lower and lower he descends,
 Rustle the leaves, the brushwood bends;
 The otter hears him tread the shore,
 And dives, and is beheld no more;
 And by the cliff of pale grey stone
 The midnight wanderer stands alone.
 Methinks, that by the moon we trace
 A well-remember'd form and face!
 That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
 Combine to tell a rueful tale,
 Of powers misused, of passion's force,
 Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse!
 'Tis Edmund's eye, at every sound
 That flings that guilty glance around;
 'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides
 The brushwood that the cavern hides;
 And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
 'Tis Edmund's form that enters there.

- IV. His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
 A lamp hath lent the cavern light.

Fearful and quick his eye surveys
 Each angle of the gloomy maze.
 Since last he left that stern abode,
 It seem'd as none its floor had trode;
 Untouch'd appear'd the various spoil,
 The purchase of his comrades' toil;
 Masks and disguises grim'd with mud,
 Arms broken and defiled with blood,
 And all the nameless tools that aid
 Night-felons in their lawless trade,
 Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
 Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.
 Still on the sordid board appear
 The relics of the noontide cheer:
 Flagons and emptied flasks were there,
 And bench o'erthrown, and shatter'd chair;
 And all around the semblance show'd,
 As when the final revel glow'd,
 When the red sun was setting fast,
 And parting pledge Guy Denzil past.
 "To Rokeby treasure-vaults!" they quaff'd,
 And shouted loud and wildly laugh'd,
 Pour'd maddening from the rocky door,
 And parted—to return no more!
 They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
 A bloody death, a burning tomb!

- v. There his own peasant dress he spies,
 Doff'd to assume that quaint disguise;
 And, shuddering, thought upon his glee,
 When prank'd in garb of minstrelsy.
 "O, be the fatal art accurst,"
 He cried, "that moved my folly first;
 Till, bribed by bandits' base applause,
 I burst through God's and Nature's laws!
 Three summer days are scanty past
 Since I have trod this cavern last,
 A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err—
 But, O, as yet no murderer!
 Even now I list my comrades' cheer,
 That general laugh is in mine ear,
 Which raised my pulse and steel'd my heart,
 As I rehearsed my treacherous part—
 And would that all since then could seem
 The phantom of a fever's dream!
 But fatal Memory notes too well
 The horrors of the dying yell
 From my despairing mates that broke,
 When flash'd the fire and roll'd the smoke;

When the avengers shouting came,
 And hemm'd us 'twixt the sword and flame!
 My frantic flight,—the lifted brand,—
 That angel's interposing hand!—
 If, for my life from slaughter freed,
 I yet could pay some grateful meed!
 Perchance this object of my quest
 May aid "—he turn'd, nor spoke the rest.

- VI. Due northward from the rugged hearth,
 With paces five he metes the earth,
 Then toil'd with mattock to explore
 The entrails of the cavern floor,
 Nor paused till, deep beneath the ground,
 His search a small steel casket found.
 Just as he stoop'd to loose its hasp,
 His shoulder felt a giant grasp;
 He started, and look'd up aghast,
 Then shriek'd!—"Twas Bertram held him fast.
 "Fear not!" he said; but who could hear
 That deep stern voice, and cease to fear?
 "Fear not!—By heaven, he shakes as much
 As partridge in the falcon's clutch: "—
 He raised him, and unloosed his hold,
 While from the opening casket roll'd
 A chain and reliquaire of gold.
 Bertram beheld it with surprise,
 Gazed on its fashion and device,
 Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
 Somewhat he smooth'd his rugged mood:
 For still the youth's half-lifted eye
 Quiver'd with terror's agony,
 And sidelong glanced, as to explore,
 In meditated flight, the door.
 "Sit," Bertram said, "from danger free:
 Thou canst not, and thou shalt not, flee.
 Chance brings me hither; hill and plain
 I've sought for refuge-place in vain.
 And tell me now, thou aguish boy,
 What makest thou here? what means this toy?
 Denzil and thou, I mark'd, were ta'en;
 What lucky chance unbound your chain?
 I deem'd, long since on Baliol's tower,
 Your heads were warp'd with sun and shower.
 Tell me the whole—and, mark! nought e'er
 Chafes me like falsehood, or like fear."
 Gathering his courage to his aid,
 But trembling still, the youth obey'd.

VII. "Denzil and I two nights pass'd o'er
 In fetters on the dungeon floor.
 A guest the third sad morrow brought;
 Our hold dark Oswald Wycliffe sought,
 And eyed my comrade long askance,
 With fix'd and penetrating glance.
 'Guy Denzil art thou call'd?'—'The same.'—
 'At Court who served wild Buckingham;
 Thence banished, won a keeper's place,
 So Villiers will'd, in Marwood-chase;
 That lost—I need not tell thee why—
 Thou madest thy wit thy wants supply,
 Then fought for Rokeby:—Have I guess'd
 My prisoner right?'—'At thy behest.'—
 He paused a while, and then went on
 With low and confidential tone;—
 Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
 Close nestled in my couch of straw.—
 'List to me, Guy. Thou know'st the great
 Have frequent need of what they hate;
 Hence, in their favour oft we see
 Unscrupled, useful men like thee.
 Were I disposed to bid thee live,
 What pledge of faith hast thou to give?'

VIII. "The ready Fiend, who never yet
 Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit,
 Prompted his lie—'His only child
 Should rest his pledge.'—The Baron smiled,
 And turn'd to me—'Thou art his son?'
 I bowed—our fetters were undone,
 And we were led to hear apart
 A dreadful lesson of his art.
 Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
 Had fair Matilda's favour won;
 And long since had their union been,
 But for her father's bigot spleen,
 Whose brute and blindfold party-rage
 Would, force per force, her hand engage
 To a base kern of Irish earth,
 Unknown his lineage and his birth,
 Save that a dying ruffian bore
 The infant brat to Rokeby door.
 Gentle restraint, he said, would lead
 Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed;
 But fair occasion he must find
 For such restraint well-meant and kind,
 The Knight being render'd to his charge
 But as a prisoner at large.

ix. "He school'd us in a well-forged tale,
 Of scheme the Castle walls to scale,
 To which was leagued each Cavalier
 That dwells upon the Tyne and Wear;
 That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
 Had dealt with us to aid the plot.
 Such was the charge, which Denzil's zeal
 Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
 Proffer'd, as witness, to make good,
 Even though the forfeit were their blood.
 I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
 His prisoners' safety Wycliffe swore;
 And then—alas! what needs there more?
 I knew I should not live to say
 The proffer I refused that day;
 Ashamed to live, yet loth to die,
 I soil'd me with their infamy!"—
 "Poor youth," said Bertram, "wavering still,
 Unfit alike for good or ill!
 But what fell next?"—"Soon as at large
 Was scroll'd and sign'd our fatal charge,
 There never yet, on tragic stage,
 Was seen so well a painted rage
 As Oswald's show'd! With loud alarm
 He call'd his garrison to arm;
 From tower to tower, from post to post,
 He hurried as if all were lost;
 Consign'd to dungeon and to chain
 The good old Knight and all his train;
 Warn'd each suspected Cavalier,
 Within his limits, to appear
 To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
 In the high church of Egliston."—

x. "Of Egliston!—Even now I pass'd,"
 Said Bertram, "as the night closed fast;
 Torches and cressets gleam'd around,
 I heard the saw and hammer sound,
 And I could mark they toil'd to raise
 A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
 Which the grim headsman's scene display'd,
 Block, axe, and sawdust ready laid.
 Some evil deed will there be done,
 Unless Matilda wed his son;—
 She loves him not—'tis shrewdly guess'd
 That Redmond rules the damsel's breast.
 This is a turn of Oswald's skill;
 But I may meet, and foil him still!—
 How camest thou to thy freedom?"—"There

Lies mystery more dark and rare.
 In midst of Wycliffe's well-feign'd rage,
 A scroll was offer'd by a page,
 Who told, a muffled horseman late
 Had left it at the Castle-gate.
 He broke the seal—his cheek show'd change,
 Sudden, portentous, wild, and strange;
 The mimic passion of his eye
 Was turn'd to actual agony;
 His hand like summer sapling shook,
 Terror and guilt were in his look.
 Denzil he judged, in time of need,
 Fit counsellor for evil deed;
 And thus apart his counsel broke,
 While with a ghastly smile he spoke:—

- XI. “ ‘ As in the pageants of the stage,
 The dead awake in this wild age,
 Mortham—whom all men deem'd decreed
 In his own deadly snare to bleed,
 Slain by a bravo, whom, o'er sea,
 He train'd to aid in murdering me,—
 Mortham has 'scaped! The coward shot
 The steed, but harm'd the rider not.’ ”
 Here, with an execration fell,
 Bertram leap'd up, and paced the cell:—
 “ Thine own grey head, or bosom dark,”
 He mutter'd, “ may be surer mark! ”
 Then sat, and sign'd to Edmund, pale
 With terror, to resume his tale.
 “ Wycliffe went on:—‘ Mark with what flights
 Of wilder'd reverie he writes:—

THE LETTER

“ ‘ Ruler of Mortham's destiny!
 Though dead, thy victim lives to thee.
 Once had he all that binds to life,
 A lovely child, a lovelier wife;
 Wealth, fame, and friendship, were his own—
 Thou gavest the word, and they are flown.
 Mark how he pays thee:—To thy hand
 He yields his honours and his land,
 One boon premised;—Restore his child!
 And, from his native land exiled,
 Mortham no more returns to claim
 His lands, his honours, or his name;
 Refuse him this, and from the slain
 Thou shalt see Mortham rise again.’ —

- XII. "This billet while the baron read,
 His faltering accents show'd his dread;
 He press'd his forehead with his palm,
 Then took a scornful tone and calm;
 'Wild as the winds, as billows wild!
 What wot I of his spouse or child?
 Hither he brought a joyous dame,
 Unknown her lineage or her name:
 Her, in some frantic fit, he slew;
 The nurse and child in fear withdrew.
 Heaven be my witness! wist I where
 To find this youth, my kinsman's heir,—
 Unguerdon'd, I would give with joy
 The father's arms to fold his boy,
 And Mortham's lands and towers resign
 To the just heirs of Mortham's line.'—
 Thou know'st that scarcely e'en his fear
 Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer;—
 'Then happy is thy vassal's part,'
 He said, 'to ease his patron's heart!
 In thine own jailer's watchful care
 Lies Mortham's just and rightful heir;
 Thy generous wish is fully won,—
 Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's son.'—
- XIII. "Up starting with a frenzied look,
 His clenched hand the Baron shook:
 'Is Hell at work? or dost thou rave,
 Or darest thou palter with me, slave!
 Perchance thou wot'st not, Barnard's towers
 Have racks, of strange and ghastly powers.'
 Denzil, who well his safety knew,
 Firmly rejoin'd, 'I tell thee true.
 Thy racks could give thee but to know
 The proofs, which I, untortured, show.—
 It chanced upon a winter night,
 When early snow made Stanmore white,
 That very night, when first of all
 Redmond O'Neale saw Rokeby-hall,
 It was my goodly lot to gain
 A reliquary and a chain,
 Twisted and chased of massive gold.
 —Demand not how the prize I hold!
 It was not given, nor lent, nor sold.—
 Gilt tablets to the chain were hung,
 With letters in the Irish tongue.
 I hid my spoil, for there was need
 That I should leave the land with speed;
 Nor then I deem'd it safe to bear

On mine own person gems so rare,
 Small heed I of the tablets took,
 But since have spell'd them by the book,
 When some sojourn in Erin's land
 Of their wild speech had given command.
 But darkling was the sense; the phrase
 And language those of other days,
 Involved of purpose, as to foil
 An interloper's prying toil.
 The words, but not the sense, I knew,
 Till fortune gave the guiding clue.

- xiv. " ' Three days since, was that clue reveal'd.
 In Thorsgill as I lay conceal'd,
 And heard at full when Rokeby's Maid
 Her uncle's history display'd;
 And now I can interpret well
 Each syllable the tablets tell.
 Mark, then: Fair Edith was the joy
 Of old O'Neale of Clandeboy;
 But from her sire and country fled,
 In secret Mortham's Lord to wed.
 O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
 Despatch'd his son to Greta's shore,
 Enjoining he should make him known
 (Until his farther will were shown)
 To Edith, but to her alone.
 What of their ill-starr'd meeting fell,
 Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so well.
- xv. " ' O'Neale it was, who, in despair,
 Robb'd Mortham of his infant heir;
 He bred him in their nurture wild,
 And call'd him murder'd Connel's child.
 Soon died the nurse; the Clan believed
 What from their Chieftain they received.
 His purpose was, that ne'er again
 The boy should cross the Irish main;
 But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
 The woods and wastes of Clandeboy.
 Then on the land wild troubles came,
 And stronger Chieftains urged a claim,
 And wrested from the old man's hands
 His native towers, his father's lands.
 Unable then, amid the strife,
 To guard young Redmond's rights or life,
 Late and reluctant he restores
 The infant to his native shores,
 With goodly gifts and letters stored,

With many a deep conjuring word,
 To Mortham and to Rokeby's Lord.
 Nought knew the clod of Irish earth,
 Who was the guide, of Redmond's birth;
 But deem'd his Chief's commands were laid
 On both, by both to be obey'd.
 How he was wounded by the way,
 I need not, and I list not say.'—

- xvi. " ' A wondrous tale! and, grant it true,
 What,' Wycliffe answer'd, ' might I do?
 Heaven knows, as willingly as now
 I raise the bonnet from my brow,
 Would I my kinsman's manors fair
 Restore to Mortham, or his heir;
 But Mortham is distraught—O'Neale
 Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
 Malignant to our rightful cause,
 And train'd in Rome's delusive laws.
 Hark thee apart! '—They whisper'd long,
 Till Denzil's voice grew bold and strong:—
 ' My proofs! I never will,' he said,
 ' Show mortal man where they are laid.
 Nor hope discovery to foreclose,
 By giving me to feed the crows;
 For I have mates at large, who know
 Where I am wont such toys to stow.
 Free me from peril and from band,
 These tablets are at thy command;
 Nor were it hard to form some train,
 To wile old Mortham o'er the main.
 Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
 Should wrest from thine the goodly land.'—
 —' I like thy wit,' said Wycliffe, ' well;
 But here in hostage shalt thou dwell.
 Thy son, unless my purpose err,
 May prove the trustier messenger.
 A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
 From me, and fetch these tokens rare.
 Gold shalt thou have, and that good store,
 And freedom, his commission o'er;
 But if his faith should chance to fail,
 The gibbet frees thee from the jail.'—

- xvii. " Mesh'd in the net himself had twined,
 What subterfuge could Denzil find?
 He told me, with reluctant sigh,
 That hidden here the tokens lie;
 Conjured my swift return and aid,

By all he scoff'd and disobey'd,
 And look'd as if the noose were tied,
 And I the priest who left his side.
 This scroll for Mortham Wycliffe gave,
 Whom I must seek by Greta's wave;
 Or in the hut where chief he hides,
 Where Thorsgill's forester resides.
 (Thence chanced it, wandering in the glade,
 That he descried our ambuscade.)
 I was dismiss'd as evening fell,
 And reach'd but now this rocky cell."—
 "Give Oswald's letter."—Bertram read,
 And tore it fiercely, shred by shred:—
 "All lies and villainy! to blind
 His noble kinsman's generous mind,
 And train him on from day to day,
 Till he can take his life away.—
 And now, declare thy purpose, youth,
 Nor dare to answer, save the truth;
 If aught I mark of Denzil's art,
 I'll tear the secret from thy heart!"—

- xviii. "It needs not. I renounce," he said,
 "My tutor and his deadly trade.
 Fix'd was my purpose to declare
 To Mortham, Redmond is his heir;
 To tell him in what risk he stands,
 And yield these tokens to his hands.
 Fix'd was my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done;
 And fix'd it rests—if I survive
 This night, and leave this cave alive."—
 "And Denzil?"—"Let them ply the rack
 Even till his joints and sinews crack!
 If Oswald tear him limb from limb,
 What ruth can Denzil claim from him,
 Whose thoughtless youth he led astray,
 And damn'd to this unhallow'd way?
 He school'd me, faith and vows were vain;
 Now let my master reap his gain."—
 "True," answer'd Bertram, "'tis his meed;
 There's retribution in the deed.
 But thou—thou art not for our course,
 Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse:
 And he, with us the gale who braves,
 Must heave such cargo to the waves,
 Or lag with overloaded prore,
 While barks unburden'd reach the shore."

xix. He paused, and, stretching him at length,
 Seem'd to repose his bulky strength.
 Communing with his secret mind,
 As half he sat, and half reclined,
 One ample hand his forehead press'd,
 And one was dropp'd across his breast.
 The shaggy eyebrows deeper came
 Above his eyes of swarthy flame;
 His lip of pride a while forbore
 The haughty curve till then it wore;
 The unalter'd fierceness of his look
 A shade of darken'd sadness took,—
 For dark and sad a presage press'd
 Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,—
 And when he spoke, his wonted tone,
 So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was gone.
 His voice was steady, low, and deep,
 Like distant waves when breezes sleep;
 And sorrow mix'd with Edmund's fear,
 Its low unbroken depth to hear.

xx. "Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
 The woe that warp'd my patron's mind:
 'Twould wake the fountains of the eye
 In other men, but mine are dry.
 Mortham must never see the fool,
 That sold himself base Wycliffe's tool;
 Yet less from thirst of sordid gain,
 Than to avenge supposed disdain.
 Say, Bertram rues his fault;—a word,
 Till now, from Bertram never heard:
 Say, too, that Mortham's Lord he prays
 To think but on their former days;
 On Quariana's beach and rock,
 On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
 On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
 And on the dart Tlatzeca threw;—
 Perchance my patron yet may hear
 More that may grace his comrade's bier.
 My soul hath felt a secret weight,
 A warning of approaching fate:
 A priest had said, 'Return, repent!'—
 As well to bid that rock be rent.
 Firm as that flint I face mine end;
 My heart may burst, but cannot bend.

xxi. "The dawning of my youth, with awe
 And prophecy, the Dalesmen saw;
 For over Redesdale it came,
 As bodeful as their beacon-flame.

Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
 When, challenging the Clans of Tyne,
 To bring their best my brand to prove,
 O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove;
 But Tynedale, nor in tower nor town,
 Held champion meet to take it down.
 My noontide, India may declare;
 Like her fierce sun, I fired the air!
 Like him, to wood and cave bade fly
 Her natives, from mine angry eye.
 Panama's maids shall long look pale
 When Risingham inspires the tale;
 Chili's dark matrons long shall tame
 The froward child with Bertram's name.
 And now, my race of terror run,
 Mine be the eve of tropic sun!
 No pale gradations quench his ray,
 No twilight dews his wrath allay;
 With disk like battle-target red,
 He rushes to his burning bed,
 Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
 Then sinks at once—and all is night.—

- XXII. "Now to thy mission, Edmund. Fly,
 Seek Mortham out, and bid him hie
 To Richmond, where his troops are laid,
 And lead his force to Redmond's aid.
 Say, till he reaches Egliston,
 A friend will watch to guard his son.
 Now, fare-thee-well; for night draws on,
 And I would rest me here alone."
 Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
 There swam in Edmund's eye a tear;
 A tribute to the courage high,
 Which stoop'd not in extremity,
 But strove, irregularly great,
 To triumph o'er approaching fate!
 Bertram beheld the dewdrop start,
 It almost touch'd his iron heart:—
 "I did not think there lived," he said,
 "One, who would tear for Bertram shed."
 He loosen'd then his baldric's hold,
 A buckle broad of massive gold;—
 "Of all the spoil that paid his pains,
 But this with Risingham remains;
 And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt take
 And wear it long for Bertram's sake.
 Once more—to Mortham speed amain;
 Farewell! and turn thee not again."

xxiii. The night has yielded to the morn,
 And far the hours of prime are worn.
 Oswald, who, since the dawn of day,
 Had cursed his messenger's delay,
 Impatient question'd now his train,
 "Was Denzil's son return'd again?"
 It chanced there answer'd of the crew,
 A menial, who young Edmund knew:
 "No son of Denzil this,"—he said;
 "A peasant boy from Winston glade,
 For song and minstrelsy renown'd,
 And knavish pranks, the hamlets round."—
 "Not Denzil's son!—From Winston vale!—
 Then it was false, that specious tale;
 Or, worse—he hath despatch'd the youth
 To show to Mortham's Lord its truth.
 Fool that I was!—but 'tis too late;—
 This is the very turn of fate!—
 The tale, or true or false, relies
 On Denzil's evidence!—He dies!—
 Ho! Provost Marshal! instantly
 Lead Denzil to the gallows-tree!
 Allow him not a parting word;
 Short be the shrift, and sure the cord!
 Then let his gory head appal
 Marauders from the Castle-wall.
 Lead forth thy guard, that duty done,
 With best despatch to Egliston.—
 —Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
 Attend me at the Castle-gate."—

xxiv. "Alas!" the old domestic said,
 And shook his venerable head,
 "Alas, my Lord! full ill to-day
 May my young master brook the way!
 The leech has spoke with grave alarm,
 Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
 Of sorrow lurking at the heart,
 That mars and lets his healing art."—
 "Tush, tell not me!—Romantic boys
 Pine themselves sick for airy toys,
 I will find cure for Wilfrid soon;
 Bid him for Egliston be boune,
 And quick!—I hear the dull death-drum
 Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come."
 He paused with scornful smile, and then
 Resumed his train of thought agen.
 "Now comes my fortune's crisis near!
 Entreaty boots not—instant fear,

Nought else, can bend Matilda's pride,
 Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
 But when she sees the scaffold placed,
 With axe and block and headsman graced,
 And when she deems, that to deny
 Dooms Redmond and her sire to die,
 She must give way.—Then, were the line
 Of Rokeby once combined with mine,
 I gain the weather-gage of fate!
 If Mortham come, he comes too late,
 While I, allied thus and prepared,
 Bid him defiance to his beard.—
 If she prove stubborn, shall I dare
 To drop the axe?—Soft! pause we there.
 Mortham still lives—yon youth may tell
 His tale—and Fairfax loves him well;—
 Else, wherefore should I now delay
 To sweep this Redmond from my way?—
 But she to piety perforce
 Must yield.—Without there! Sound to horse.”

xxv. 'Twas bustle in the court below,—
 “Mount, and march forward!”—Forth they go,
 Steeds neigh and trample all around,
 Steel rings, spears glimmer, trumpets sound.—
 Just then was sung his parting hymn;
 And Denzil turn'd his eyeballs dim,
 And, scarcely conscious what he sees,
 Follows the horsemen down the Tees;
 And scarcely conscious what he hears,
 The trumpets tingle in his ears,
 O'er the long bridge they're sweeping now,
 The van is hid by greenwood bough;
 But ere the rearward had pass'd o'er,
 Guy Denzil heard and saw no more!
 One stroke, upon the Castle bell,
 To Oswald rung his dying knell.

xxvi. O, for that pencil, erst profuse
 Of chivalry's emblazon'd hues,
 That traced of old, in Woodstock bower,
 The pageant of the Leaf and Flower,
 And bodied forth the tourney high,
 Held for the hand of Emily!
 Then might I paint the tumult broad,
 That to the crowded abbey flow'd,
 And pour'd, as with an ocean's sound,
 Into the church's ample bound!
 Then might I show each varying mien,

Exulting, woeful, or serene;
 Indifference, with his idiot stare,
 And Sympathy, with anxious air,
 Paint the dejected Cavalier,
 Doubtful, disarm'd, and sad of cheer;
 And his proud foe, whose formal eye
 Claim'd conquest now and mastery;
 And the brute crowd, whose envious zeal
 Huzzas each turn of Fortune's wheel,
 And loudest shouts when lowest lie
 Exalted worth and station high.
 Yet what may such a wish avail?
 'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
 Hurrying, as best I can, along,
 The hearers and the hasty song;—
 Like traveller when approaching home,
 Who sees the shades of evening come,
 And must not now his course delay,
 Or choose the fair, but winding way;
 Nay, scarcely may his pace suspend,
 Where o'er his head the wildings bend,
 To bless the breeze that cools his brow,
 Or snatch a blossom from a bough.

- xxvii. The reverend pile lay wild and waste,
 Profaned, dishonour'd, and defaced.
 Through storied lattices no more
 In soften'd light the sunbeams pour,
 Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
 Of shrine, and monument, and niche.
 The Civil fury of the time
 Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
 For dark Fanaticism rent
 Altar, and screen, and ornament,
 And peasant hands the tombs o'erthrew
 Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz-Hugh.
 And now was seen, unwonted sight,
 In holy walls a scaffold dight!
 Where once the priest, of grace divine
 Dealt to his flock the mystic sign;
 There stood the block display'd, and there
 The headsman grim his hatchet bare;
 And for the word of Hope and Faith,
 Resounded loud a doom of death.
 Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath was heard,
 And echo'd thrice the herald's word,
 Dooming, for breach of martial laws,
 And treason to the Commons' cause,
 The Knight of Rokeby and O'Neale

To stoop their heads to block and steel.
The trumpets flourish'd high and shrill,
Then was a silence dead and still;
And silent prayers to heaven were cast,
And stifled sobs were bursting fast,
Till from the crowd begun to rise
Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
And from the distant aisles there came
Deep-mutter'd threats, with Wycliffe's name.

xxviii. But Oswald, guarded by his band,
Powerful in evil, waved his hand,
And bade Sedition's voice be dead,
On peril of the murmurer's head.
Then first his glance sought Rokeby's Knight;
Who gazed on the tremendous sight,
As calm as if he came a guest
To kindred Baron's feudal feast,
As calm as if that trumpet-call
Were summons to the banner'd hall;
Firm in his loyalty he stood,
And prompt to seal it with his blood.
With downcast look drew Oswald nigh,—
He durst not cope with Rokeby's eye!—
And said, with low and faltering breath,
"Thou know'st the terms of life and death."
The Knight then turn'd, and sternly smiled;
"The maiden is mine only child,
Yet shall my blessing leave her head,
If with a traitor's son she wed."
Then Redmond spoke: "The life of one
Might thy malignity atone,
On me be flung a double guilt!
Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine be spilt!"
Wycliffe had listen'd to his suit,
But dread prevailed, and he was mute.

xxix. And now he pours his choice of fear
In secret on Matilda's ear;
"An union form'd with me and mine,
Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line.
Consent, and all this dread array,
Like morning dream, shall pass away;
Refuse, and, by my duty press'd,
I give the word—thou know'st the rest."
Matilda, still and motionless,
With terror heard the dread address,
Pale as the sheeted maid who dies
To hopeless love a sacrifice;

Then wrung her hands in agony,
 And round her cast bewilder'd eye.
 Now on the scaffold glanced, and now
 On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
 She veil'd her face, and, with a voice
 Scarce audible,—“I make my choice!
 Spare but their lives!—for aught beside,
 Let Wilfrid's doom my fate decide.
 He once was generous!”—As she spoke,
 Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph broke:—
 “Wilfrid, where loiter'd ye so late?
 Why upon Basil rest thy weight?—
 Art spell-bound by enchanter's wand?—
 Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded hand;
 Thank her with raptures, simple boy!
 Should tears and trembling speak thy joy?”—
 “O hush, my sire! To prayer and tear
 Of mine thou hast refused thine ear;
 But now the awful hour draws on,
 When truth must speak in loftier tone.”

xxx. He took Matilda's hand:—“Dear maid,
 Couldst thou so injure me,” he said,
 “Of thy poor friend so basely deem,
 As blend with him this barbarous scheme?
 Alas! my efforts made in vain,
 Might well have saved this added pain.
 But now, bear witness earth and heaven,
 That ne'er was hope to mortal given,
 So twisted with the strings of life,
 As this—to call Matilda wife!
 I bid it now for ever part,
 And with the effort bursts my heart!”
 His feeble frame was worn so low,
 With wounds, with watching, and with woe,
 That nature could no more sustain
 The agony of mental pain.
 He kneel'd—his lip her hand had press'd,—
 Just then he felt the stern arrest.
 Lower and lower sunk his head,—
 They raised him,—but the life was fled!
 Then, first alarm'd, his sire and train
 Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
 The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
 Had left our mortal hemisphere,
 And sought in better world the mead,
 To blameless life by Heaven decreed.

xxx. The wretched sire beheld, aghast,
 With Wilfrid all his projects past,

All turn'd and centred on his son,
 On Wilfrid all—and he was gone.
 "And I am childless now," he said;
 "Childless, through that relentless maid!
 A lifetime's arts, in vain essay'd,
 Are bursting on their artist's head!—
 Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and there
 Comes hated Mortham for his heir,
 Eager to knit in happy band
 With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's hand.
 And shall their triumph soar o'er all
 The schemes deep-laid to work their fall?
 No!—deeds, which prudence might not dare,
 Appal not vengeance and despair.
 The murd'ress weeps upon his bier—
 I'll change to real that feigned tear!
 They all shall share destruction's shock;—
 Ho! lead the captives to the block!"—
 But ill his Provost could divine
 His feelings, and forbore the sign.
 "Slave! to the block!—or I, or they,
 Shall face the judgment-seat this day!"

xxxii. The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
 Like horse's hoof on harden'd ground;
 Nearer it came, and yet more near,—
 The very death's-men paused to hear.
 'Tis in the churchyard now—the tread
 Hath waked the dwelling of the dead!
 Fresh sod, and old sepulchral stone,
 Return the tramp in varied tone.
 All eyes upon the gateway hung,
 When through the Gothic arch there sprung
 A horseman arm'd, at headlong speed—
 Sable his cloak, his plume, his steed.
 Fire from the flinty floor was spurn'd,
 The vaults unwonted clang return'd!—
 One instant's glance around he threw,
 From saddlebow his pistol drew.
 Grimly determined was his look!
 His charger with the spurs he strook—
 All scatter'd backward as he came,
 For all knew Bertram Risingham!
 Three bounds that noble courser gave;
 The first has reach'd the central nave,
 The second clear'd the chancel wide,
 The third—he was at Wycliffe's side.
 Full levell'd at the Baron's head,
 Rung the report—the bullet sped—

And to his long account, and last,
 Without a groan dark Oswald past!
 All was so quick, that it might seem
 A flash of lightning, or a dream.

xxxiii. While yet the smoke the deed conceals,
 Bertram his ready charger wheels;
 But flounder'd on the pavement-floor
 The steed, and down the rider bore,
 And, bursting in the headlong sway,
 The faithless saddle-girths gave way.
 'Twas while he toil'd him to be freed,
 And with the rein to raise the steed,
 That from amazement's iron trance
 All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at once.
 Sword, halberd, musket-but, their blows
 Hail'd upon Bertram as he rose;
 A score of pikes, with each a wound,
 Bore down and pinn'd him to the ground;
 But still his struggling force he rears,
 'Gainst hacking brands and stabbing spears;
 Thrice from assailants shook him free,
 Once gain'd his feet, and twice his knee.
 By tenfold odds oppress'd at length,
 Despite his struggles and his strength,
 He took a hundred mortal wounds,
 As mute as fox 'mongst mangling hounds;
 And when he died, his parting groan
 Had more of laughter than of moan!
 —They gazed, as when a lion dies,
 And hunters scarcely trust their eyes,
 But bend their weapons on the slain,
 Lest the grim king should rouse again!
 Then blow and insult some renew'd,
 And from the trunk, the head had hew'd,
 But Basil's voice the deed forbade;
 A mantle o'er the corse he laid:—
 "Fell as he was in act and mind,
 He left no bolder heart behind:
 Then give him, for a soldier meet,
 A soldier's cloak for winding sheet."

xxxiv. No more of death and dying pang,
 No more of trump and bugle clang,
 Though through the sounding woods there come
 Banner and bugle, trump and drum.
 Arm'd with such powers as well had freed
 Young Redmond at his utmost need,
 And back'd with such a band of horse,

As might less ample powers enforce;
 Possess'd of every proof and sign
 That gave an heir to Mortham's line,
 And yielded to a father's arms
 An image of his Edith's charms,—
 Mortham is come, to hear and see
 Of this strange morn the history.
 What saw he?—not the church's floor,
 Cumber'd with dead and stain'd with gore;
 What heard he?—not the clamorous crowd,
 That shout their gratulations loud:
 Redmond he saw and heard alone,
 Clasp'd him, and sobb'd, "My son! my son!"—

xxxv. This chanced upon a summer morn,
 When yellow waved the heavy corn:
 But when brown August o'er the land
 Call'd forth the reaper's busy band,
 A gladsome sight the silvan road
 From Egliston to Mortham show'd.
 A while the hardy rustic leaves
 The task to bind and pile the sheaves,
 And maids their sickles fling aside,
 To gaze on bridegroom and on bride,
 And childhood's wondering group draws near,
 And from the gleaner's hands the ear
 Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
 And blessing on the lovely pair.
 'Twas then the Maid of Rokeby gave
 Her plighted troth to Redmond brave;
 And Teesdale can remember yet
 How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
 And, for their troubles, bade them prove
 A lengthen'd life of peace and love.

Time and Tide had thus their sway,
 Yielding, like an April day,
 Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
 Years of joy for hours of sorrow!

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN; OR, THE VALE OF ST. JOHN A LOVER'S TALE

"I may as well add in this place, that, being much urged by my intimate friend, now unhappily no more, William Erskine (a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinnedder), I agreed to write the little romantic tale called the 'Bridal of Triermain;' but it was on the condition that he should make no serious effort to disown the composition, if report should lay it at his door. As he was more than suspected of a taste for poetry, and as I took care, in several places, to mix something which might resemble (as far as was in my power) my friend's feeling and manner, the train easily caught, and two large editions were sold. A third being called for, Lord Kinnedder became unwilling to aid any longer a deception which was going farther than he expected or desired, and the real author's name was given."

ABBOTSFORD, *April* 1830.

W. S.

INTRODUCTION

- I. Come, Lucy! while 'tis morning hour,
The woodland brook we needs must pass;
So, ere the sun assume his power,
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the flower,
Though vanish'd from the velvet grass.
Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
May serve us for a silvan bridge;
For here compell'd to disunite,
Round petty isles the runnels glide,
And, chafing off their puny spite,
The shallow murmurers waste their might,
Yielding to footstep free and light
A dry-shod pass from side to side.
- II. Nay, why this hesitating pause?
And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
Why sidelong eye the streamlet's brim?
Titania's foot without a slip,
Like thine, though timid, light, and slim,
From stone to stone might safely trip,
Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to dip
That binds her slipper's silken rim.

Or trust thy lover's strength: nor fear
 That this same stalwart arm of mine,
 Which could yon oak's prone trunk uprear,
 Shall shrink beneath the burden dear
 Of form so slender, light, and fine—
 So,—now, the danger dared at last,
 Look back, and smile at perils past!

III. And now we reach the favourite glade,
 Paled in by copsewood, cliff, and stone,
 Where never harsher sounds invade,
 To break affection's whispering tone,
 Than the deep breeze that waves the shade,
 Than the small brooklet's feeble moan.
 Come! rest thee on thy wonted seat,
 Moss'd is the stone, the turf is green,
 A place where lovers best may meet,
 Who would that not their love be seen.
 The boughs, that dim the summer sky,
 Shall hide us from each lurking spy,
 That fain would spread the invidious tale,
 How Lucy of the lofty eye,
 Noble in birth, in fortunes high,
 She for whom lords and barons sigh,
 Meets her poor Arthur in the dale.

iv. How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh!
 And why does Lucy shun mine eye?
 Is it because that crimson draws
 Its colour from some secret cause,
 Some hidden movement of the breast,
 She would not that her Arthur guess'd?
 O! quicker far is lovers' ken
 Than the dull glance of common men,
 And, by strange sympathy, can spell
 The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
 And mine, in Lucy's blush, saw met
 The hues of pleasure and regret;
 Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
 And shared with Love the crimson glow;
 Well pleased that thou art Arthur's choice,
 Yet shamed thine own is placed so low:
 Thou turn'st thy self-confessing cheek,
 As if to meet the breeze's cooling;
 Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor speak,
 For Love, too, has his hours of schooling.

v. Too oft my anxious eye has spied
 That secret grief thou fain wouldst hide,

The passing pang of humbled pride;
 Too oft, when through the splendid hall,
 The load-star of each heart and eye,
 My fair one leads the glittering ball,
 Will her stol'n glance on Arthur fall,
 With such a blush and such a sigh!
 Thou wouldst not yield, for wealth or rank,
 The heart thy worth and beauty won,
 Nor leave me on this mossy bank,
 To meet a rival on a throne:
 Why, then, should vain repinings rise,
 That to thy lover fate denies
 A nobler name, a wide domain,
 A Baron's birth, a menial train,
 Since Heaven assign'd him, for his part,
 A lyre, a falchion, and a heart?

- VI. My sword—its master must be dumb;
 But, when a soldier names my name,
 Approach, my Lucy! fearless come,
 Nor dread to hear of Arthur's shame.
 My heart—'mid all yon courtly crew,
 Of lordly rank and lofty line,
 Is there to love and honour true,
 That boasts a pulse so warm as mine?
 They praised thy diamonds' lustre rare—
 Match'd with thine eyes, I thought it faded;
 They praised the pearls that bound thy hair—
 I only saw the locks they braided;
 They talk'd of wealthy dower and land,
 And titles of high birth the token—
 I thought of Lucy's heart and hand,
 Nor knew the sense of what was spoken.
 And yet, if rank'd in Fortune's roll,
 I might have learn'd their choice unwise,
 Who rate the dower above the soul,
 And Lucy's diamonds o'er her eyes.

- VII. My lyre—it is an idle toy,
 That borrows accents not its own,
 Like warbler of Colombian sky,
 That sings but in a mimic tone.
 Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted well,
 Nor boasts it aught of Border spell;
 Its strings no feudal slogan pour,
 Its heroes draw no broad claymore;
 No shouting clans applauses raise,
 Because it sung their father's praise;
 On Scottish moor, or English down,

It ne'er was graced by fair renown;
 Nor won,—best meed to minstrel true,—
 One favouring smile from fair BUCCLEUCH!
 By one poor streamlet sounds its tone,
 And heard by one dear maid alone.

- VIII. But, if thou bid'st, these tones shall tell
 Of errant knight, and damozelle;
 Of the dread knot a Wizard tied,
 In punishment of maiden's pride,
 In notes of marvel and of fear,
 That best may charm romantic ear.
 For Lucy loves,—like COLLINS, ill-starred name,
 Whose lay's requital, was that tardy fame,
 Who bound no laurel round his living head,
 Should hang it o'er his monument when dead,—
 For Lucy loves to tread enchanted strand,
 And thread, like him, the maze of fairy land;
 Of golden battlements to view the gleam,
 And slumber soft by some Elysian stream;
 Such lays she loves,—and, such my Lucy's choice,
 What other song can claim her Poet's voice?

CANTO FIRST

- I. Where is the Maiden of mortal strain,
 That may match with the Baron of Triermain?
 She must be lovely, and constant, and kind,
 Holy and pure, and humble of mind,
 Blithe of cheer, and gentle of mood,
 Courteous, and generous, and noble of blood—
 Lovely as the sun's first ray,
 When it breaks the clouds of an April day;
 Constant and true as the widow'd dove,
 Kind as a minstrel that sings of love;
 Pure as the fountain in rocky cave,
 Where never sunbeam kiss'd the wave;
 Humble as maiden that loves in vain,
 Holy as hermit's vesper strain;
 Gentle as breeze that but whispers and dies,
 Yet blithe as the light leaves that dance in its sighs;
 Courteous as monarch the morn he is crown'd,
 Generous as spring-dews that bless the glad ground;
 Noble her blood as the currents that met
 In the veins of the noblest Plantagenet—
 Such must her form be, her mood, and her strain,
 That shall match with Sir Roland of Triermain.

- II. Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid him to sleep,
 His blood it was fever'd, his breathing was deep.
 He had been pricking against the Scot,
 The foray was long, and the skirmish hot;
 His dinted helm and his buckler's plight
 Bore token of a stubborn fight.
 All in the castle must hold them still,
 Harpers must lull him to his rest,
 With the slow soft tunes he loves the best,
 Till sleep sink down upon his breast,
 Like the dew on a summer hill.
- III. It was the dawn of an autumn day;
 The sun was struggling with frost-fog grey,
 That like a silvery crape was spread
 Round Skiddaw's dim and distant head,
 And faintly gleam'd each painted pane
 Of the lordly halls of Triermain,
 When that Baron bold awoke.
 Starting he woke, and loudly did call,
 Rousing his menials in bower and hall,
 While hastily he spoke.
- IV. "Hearken, my minstrels! Which of ye all
 Touch'd his harp with that dying fall,
 So sweet, so soft, so faint,
 It seem'd an angel's whisper'd call
 To an expiring saint?
 And hearken, my merry-men! What time or where
 Did she pass, that maid with her heavenly brow,
 With her look so sweet and her eyes so fair,
 And her graceful step and her angel air,
 And the eagle plume in her dark-brown hair,
 That pass'd from my bower e'en now?"
- V. Answer'd him Richard de Bretville; he
 Was chief of the Baron's minstrelsy,—
 "Silent, noble chieftain, we
 Have sat since midnight close,
 When such lulling sounds as the brooklet sings,
 Murmur'd from our melting strings,
 And hush'd you to repose.
 Had a harp-note sounded here,
 It had caught my watchful ear,
 Although it fell as faint and shy
 As bashful maiden's half-form'd sigh,
 When she thinks her lover near."—
 Answer'd Philip of Fasthwaite tall,
 He kept guard in the outer-hall,—

" Since at eve our watch took post,
 Not a foot has thy portal cross'd;
 Else had I heard the steps, though low
 And light they fell, as when earth receives,
 In morn the frost, the wither'd leaves,
 That drop when no winds blow."—

- VI. " Then come thou hither, Henry, my page,
 Whom I saved from the sack of Hermitage,
 When that dark castle, tower, and spire,
 Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
 And redden'd all the Nine-stane Hill,
 And the shrieks of death, that wildly broke
 Through devouring flame and smothering smoke,
 Made the warrior's heart-blood chill.
 The trustiest thou of all my train,
 My fleetest courser thou must rein,
 And ride to Lyulph's tower,
 And from the Baron of Triermain
 Greet well that sage of power.
 He is sprung from Druid sires,
 And British bards that tuned their lyres
 To Arthur's and Pendragon's praise,
 And his who sleeps at Dunmailraise.¹
 Gifted like his gifted race,
 He the characters can trace,
 Graven deep in elder time
 Upon Hellvellyn's cliffs sublime;
 Sign and sigil well doth he know,
 And can bode of weal and woe,
 Of kingdoms' fall, and fate of wars,
 From mystic dreams and course of stars.
 He shall tell if middle earth
 To that enchanting shape gave birth,
 Or if 'twas but an airy thing,
 Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
 Framed from the rainbow's varying dyes,
 Or fading tints of western skies.
 For, by the Blessed Rood I swear,
 If that fair form breathe vital air,
 No other maiden by my side
 Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride! "

- VII. The faithful Page he mounts his steed,
 And soon he cross'd green Irthing's mead,

¹ Dunmailraise is one of the grand passes from Cumberland into Westmoreland. It takes its name from a cairn, or pile of stones, erected, it is said, to the memory of Dunmail, the last King of Cumberland

Dash'd o'er Kirkoswald's verdant plain,
 And Eden barr'd his course in vain.
 He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round,
 For feats of chivalry renown'd,
 Left Mayburgh's mound and stones of power,
 By Druids raised in magic hour,
 And traced the Eamont's winding way,
 Till Ulfo's lake¹ beneath him lay.

- VIII. Onward he rode, the pathway still
 Winding betwixt the lake and hill;
 Till, on the fragment of a rock,
 Struck from its base by lightning shock,
 He saw the hoary Sage:
 The silver moss and lichen twined,
 With fern and deer-hair check'd and lined,
 A cushion fit for age;
 And o'er him shook the aspen-tree,
 A restless rustling canopy.
 Then sprung young Henry from his selle,
 And greeted Lyulph grave,
 And then his master's tale did tell,
 And then for counsel crave.
 The Man of Years mused long and deep,
 Of time's lost treasures taking keep,
 And then, as rousing from a sleep,
 His solemn answer gave.

- IX. "That maid is born of middle earth,
 And may of man be won,
 Though there have glided since her birth
 Five hundred years and one.
 But where's the Knight in all the north,
 That dare the adventure follow forth,
 So perilous to knightly worth,
 In the valley of St. John?
 Listen, youth, to what I tell,
 And bind it on thy memory well;
 Nor muse that I commence the rhyme
 Far distant 'mid the wrecks of time.
 The mystic tale, by bard and sage,
 Is handed down from Merlin's age.

LYULPH'S TALE

- x. "King Arthur has ridden from merry Carlisle
 When Pentecost was o'er:
 He journey'd like errant-knight the while,

¹ Ulswater.

And sweetly the summer sun did smile
On mountain, moss, and moor.
Above his solitary track
Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
Cast amber'd radiance red and dun,
Though never sunbeam could discern
The surface of that sable tarn,¹
In whose black mirror you may spy
The stars, while noontide lights the sky.
The gallant King he skirted still
The margin of that mighty hill;
Rock upon rocks incumbent hung,
And torrents, down the gullies flung,
Join'd the rude river that brawl'd on,
Recoiling now from crag and stone,
Now diving deep from human ken,
And raving down its darksome glen.
The Monarch judged this desert wild,
With such romantic ruin piled,
Was theatre by Nature's hand
For feat of high achievement plann'd.

- xI. "O rather he chose, that Monarch bold,
On venturous quest to ride,
In plate and mail, by wood and wold,
Than, with ermine trapp'd and cloth of gold,
In princely bower to bide;
The bursting crash of a foeman's spear
As it shiver'd against his mail,
Was merrier music to his ear
Than courtier's whisper'd tale:
And the clash of Caliburn more dear,
When on the hostile casque it rung,
Than all the lays
To their monarch's praise
That the harpers of Reged sung.
He loved better to rest by wood or river,
Than in bower of his bride, Dame Guenever,
For he left that lady, so lovely of cheer,
To follow adventures of danger and fear;
And the frank-hearted Monarch full little did wot,
That she smiled, in his absence, on brave Lancelot.

¹ The small lake called Scales-tarn lies so deeply embosomed in the recesses of the huge mountain called Saddleback, more poetically Glaramara, is of such great depth, and so completely hidden from the sun, that it is said its beams never reach it, and that the reflection of the stars may be seen at mid-day.

xii. "He rode, till over down and dell
The shade more broad and deeper fell;
And though around the mountain's head
Flow'd streams of purple, and gold, and red,
Dark at the base, unblest by beam,
Frown'd the black rocks, and roar'd the stream.
With toil the King his way pursued
By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood,
Till on his course obliquely shone
The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
Down sloping to the western sky,
Where lingering sunbeams love to lie.
Right glad to feel those beams again,
The King drew up his charger's rein;
With gauntlet raised he screen'd his sight,
As dazzled with the level light,
And, from beneath his glove of mail,
Scann'd at his ease the lovely vale,
While 'gainst the sun his armour bright
Gleam'd ruddy like the beacon's light.

xiii. "Paled in by many a lofty hill,
The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
And, down its verdant bosom led,
A winding brooklet found its bed.
But, midmost of the vale, a mound
Arose with airy turrets crown'd,
Buttress, and rampire's circling bound,
And mighty keep and tower;
Seem'd some primeval giant's hand
The castle's massive walls had plann'd,
A ponderous bulwark to withstand
Ambitious Nimrod's power.
Above the moated entrance slung,
The balanced drawbridge trembling hung,
As jealous of a foe;
Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
With iron studded, clench'd, and barr'd,
And prong'd portcullis, join'd to guard
The gloomy pass below.
But the grey walls no banners crown'd,
Upon the watch-tower's airy round
No warder stood his horn to sound,
No guard beside the bridge was found,
And, where the Gothic gateway frown'd,
Glanced neither bill nor bow.

xiv. "Beneath the castle's gloomy pride,
In ample round did Arthur ride

Three times; nor living thing he spied,
 Nor heard a living sound,
 Save that, awakening from her dream,
 The owlet now began to scream,
 In concert with the rushing stream,
 That wash'd the battled mound.
 He lighted from his goodly steed,
 And he left him to graze on bank and mead;
 And slowly he climb'd the narrow way,
 That reach'd the entrance grim and grey,
 And he stood the outward arch below,
 And his bugle-horn prepared to blow,
 In summons blithe and bold,
 Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
 The guardian of this dismal Keep,
 Which well he guess'd the hold
 Of wizard stern, or goblin grim,
 Or pagan of gigantic limb,
 The tyrant of the wold.

xv. "The ivory bugle's golden tip
 Twice touch'd the Monarch's manly lip,
 And twice his hand withdrew.
 —Think not but Arthur's heart was good!
 His shield was cross'd by the blessed rood,
 Had a pagan host before him stood,
 He had charged them through and through;
 Yet the silence of that ancient place
 Sunk on his heart, and he paused a space
 Ere yet his horn he blew.
 But, instant as its 'larum rung,
 The castle gate was open flung,
 Portcullis rose with crashing groan
 Full harshly up its groove of stone;
 The balance-beams obey'd the blast,
 And down the trembling drawbridge cast;
 The vaulted arch before him lay,
 With nought to bar the gloomy way,
 And onward Arthur paced, with hand
 On Caliburn's¹ resistless brand.

xvi. "A hundred torches, flashing bright,
 Dispell'd at once the gloomy night
 That lour'd along the walls,
 And show'd the King's astonish'd sight
 The inmates of the halls.
 Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,

¹ This was the name of King Arthur's well-known sword, sometimes also called Excalibar.

Nor giant huge of form and limb,
 Nor heathen knight, was there;
 But the cressets, which odours flung aloft,
 Show'd by their yellow light and soft,
 A band of damsels fair.
 Onward they came, like summer wave
 That dances to the shore;
 An hundred voices welcome gave,
 And welcome o'er and o'er!
 An hundred lovely hands assail
 The bucklers of the monarch's mail
 And busy labour'd to unhasp
 Rivet of steel and iron clasp.
 One wrapp'd him in a mantle fair,
 And one flung odours on his hair;
 His short curl'd ringlets one smooth'd down,
 One wreathed them with a myrtle crown.
 A bride upon her wedding-day,
 Was tended ne'er by troop so gay.

xvii. "Loud laugh'd they all,—the King, in vain,
 With questions task'd the giddy train;
 Let him entreat, or crave, or call,
 'Twas one reply,—loud laugh'd they all.
 Then o'er him mimic chains they fling,
 Framed of the fairest flowers of spring.
 While some their gentle force unite,
 Onward to drag the wondering knight,
 Some, bolder, urge his pace with blows,
 Dealt with the lily or the rose.
 Behind him were in triumph borne
 The warlike arms he late had worn.
 Four of the train combined to rear
 The terrors of Tintadgel's spear;¹
 Two, laughing at their lack of strength,
 Dragg'd Caliburn in cumbrous length;
 One, while she aped a martial stride,
 Placed on her brows the helmet's pride;
 Then scream'd, 'twixt laughter and surprise,
 To feel its depth o'erwhelm her eyes.
 With revel-shout, and triumph-song,
 Thus gaily march'd the giddy throng.

xviii. "Through many a gallery and hall
 They led, I ween, their royal thrall;
 At length, beneath a fair arcade
 Their march and song at once they staid.

¹ Tintadgel Castle, in Cornwall, is reported to have been the birth-place of King Arthur.

The eldest maiden of the band,
 (The lovely maid was scarce eighteen,)
 Raised, with imposing air, her hand,
 And reverent silence did command,
 On entrance of their Queen,
 And they were mute.—But as a glance
 They steal on Arthur's countenance
 Bewilder'd with surprise,
 Their smother'd mirth again 'gan speak,
 In archly dimpled chin and cheek,
 And laughter-lighted eyes.

- xix. "The attributes of those high days
 Now only live in minstrel-lays;
 For Nature, now exhausted, still
 Was then profuse of good and ill.
 Strength was gigantic, valour high,
 And wisdom soar'd beyond the sky,
 And beauty had such matchless beam
 As lights not now a lover's dream.
 Yet e'en in that romantic age,
 Ne'er were such charms by mortal seen,
 As Arthur's dazzled eyes engage,
 When forth on that enchanted stage,
 With glittering train of maid and page,
 Advanced the castle's Queen!
 While up the hall she slowly pass'd,
 Her dark eye on the King she cast,
 That flash'd expression strong;
 The longer dwelt that lingering look,
 Her cheek the livelier colour took,
 And scarce the shame-faced King could brook
 The gaze that lasted long.
 A sage, who had that look espied,
 Where kindling passion strove with pride,
 Had whisper'd, 'Prince, beware!
 From the chafed tiger rend the prey,
 Rush on the lion when at bay,
 Bar the fell dragon's blighted way,
 But shun that lovely snare!'—
- xx. "At once that inward strife suppress'd
 The dame approach'd her warlike guest,
 With greeting in that fair degree,
 Where female pride and courtesy
 Are blended with such passing art
 As awes at once and charms the heart.
 A courtly welcome first she gave,
 Then of his goodness 'gan to crave

Construction fair and true
 Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
 Who drew from lonely glens their birth,
 Nor knew to pay to stranger worth
 And dignity their due;
 And then she pray'd that he would rest
 That night her castle's honour'd guest.
 The Monarch meetly thanks express'd;
 The banquet rose at her behest,
 With lay and tale, and laugh and jest,
 Apace the evening flew.

- xxi. "The Lady sate the Monarch by,
 Now in her turn abash'd and shy,
 And with indifference seem'd to hear
 The toys he whispered in her ear.
 Her bearing modest was and fair,
 Yet shadows of constraint were there,
 That show'd an over-cautious care
 Some inward thought to hide;
 Oft did she pause in full reply,
 And oft cast down her large dark eye,
 Oft check'd the soft voluptuous sigh,
 That heaved her bosom's pride.
 Slight symptoms these, but shepherds know
 How hot the mid-day sun shall glow,
 From the mist of morning sky;
 And so the wily Monarch guess'd,
 That this assumed restraint express'd
 More ardent passions in the breast,
 Than ventured to the eye.
 Closer he press'd, while beakers rang,
 While maidens laugh'd and minstrels sang,
 Still closer to her ear—
 But why pursue the common tale?
 Or wherefore show how knights prevail
 When ladies dare to hear?
 Or wherefore trace, from what slight cause
 Its source one tyrant passion draws,
 Till, mastering all within,
 Where lives the man that has not tried,
 How mirth can into folly glide,
 And folly into sin!"

CANTO SECOND

LYULPH'S TALE, CONTINUED

- I. "Another day, another day,
And yet another glides away!
The Saxon stern, the pagan Dane,
Maraud on Britain's shores again.
Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
Lies loitering in a lady's bower;
The horn, that foemen wont to fear,
Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian deer,
And Caliburn, the British pride,
Hangs useless by a lover's side.
- II. "Another day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
Heroic plans in pleasure drown'd,
He thinks not of the Table Round;
In lawless love dissolved his life,
He thinks not of his beauteous wife:
Better he loves to snatch a flower
From bosom of his paramour,
Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
The honours of his heathen crest!
Better to wreath, 'mid tresses brown,
The heron's plume her hawk struck down,
Than o'er the altar give to flow
The banners of a Paynim foe.
Thus, week by week, and day by day,
His life inglorious glides away:
But she, that soothes his dream, with fear
Beholds his hour of waking near!
- III. "Much force have mortal charms to stay
Our peace in Virtue's toilsome way;
But Guendolen's might far outshine
Each maid of merely mortal line.
Her mother was of human birth,
Her sire a Genie of the earth,
In days of old deem'd to preside
O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's pride,
By youths and virgins worshipp'd long,
With festive dance and choral song,
Till, when the cross to Britain came,
On heathen altars died the flame.
Now, deep in Wastdale solitude,
The downfall of his rights he rued,

And, born of his resentment heir,
 He train'd to guile that lady fair,
 To sink in slothful sin and shame
 The champions of the Christian name.
 Well skill'd to keep vain thoughts alive,
 And all to promise, nought to give,—
 The timid youth had hope in store,
 The bold and pressing gain'd no more.
 As wilder'd children leave their home,
 After the rainbow's arch to roam,
 Her lovers barter'd fair esteem,
 Faith, fame, and honour, for a dream.

- iv. " Her sire's soft arts the soul to tame
 She practised thus—till Arthur came;
 Then, frail humanity had part,
 And all the mother claim'd her heart.
 Forgot each rule her father gave,
 Sunk from a princess to a slave,
 Too late must Guendolen deplore,
 He, that has all, can hope no more!
 Now must she see her lover strain,
 At every turn her feeble chain;
 Watch, to new-bind each knot, and shrink
 To view each fast-decaying link.
 Art she invokes to Nature's aid,
 Her vest to zone, her locks to braid;
 Each varied pleasure heard her call,
 The feast, the tourney, and the ball:
 Her storied lore she next applies,
 Taxing her mind to aid her eyes;
 Now more than mortal wise, and then
 In female softness sunk again;
 Now, raptured, with each wish complying,
 With feign'd reluctance now denying;
 Each charm she varied, to retain
 A varying heart—and all in vain!

- v. " Thus in the garden's narrow bound,
 Flank'd by some castle's Gothic round,
 Fain would the artist's skill provide,
 The limits of his realms to hide.
 The walks in labyrinths he twines,
 Shade after shade with skill combines,
 With many a varied flowery knot,
 And copse, and arbour, decks the spot,
 Tempting the hasty foot to stay,
 And linger on the lovely way—
 Vain art! vain hope! 'tis fruitless all!

At length we reach the bounding wall,
And, sick of flower and trim-dress'd tree,
Long for rough glades and forest free.

VI. "Three summer months had scantly flown,
When Arthur, in embarrass'd tone,
Spoke of his liegemen and his throne;
Said, all too long had been his stay,
And duties, which a Monarch sway,
Duties, unknown to humbler men,
Must tear her knight from Guendolen.—
She listen'd silently the while,
Her mood express'd in bitter smile;
Beneath her eye must Arthur quail,
And oft resume the unfinish'd tale,
Confessing, by his downcast eye,
The wrong he sought to justify.
He ceased. A moment mute she gazed,
And then her looks to heaven she raised,
One palm her temples veiled, to hide
The tear that sprung in spite of pride!
The other for an instant press'd
The foldings of her silken vest!

VII. "At her reproachful sign and look,
The hint the Monarch's conscience took.
Eager he spoke—'No, lady, no!
Deem not of British Arthur so,
Nor think he can deserter prove
To the dear pledge of mutual love.
I swear by sceptre and by sword,
As belted knight and Britain's lord,
That if a boy shall claim my care,
That boy is born a kingdom's heir;
But, if a maiden Fate allows,
To choose that maid a fitting spouse,
A summer-day in lists shall strive
My knights,—the bravest knights alive,—
And he, the best and bravest tried,
Shall Arthur's daughter claim for bride.'—
He spoke, with voice resolved and high—
The lady deign'd him not reply.

VIII. "At dawn of morn, ere on the brake
His matins did a warbler make,
Or stirr'd his wing to brush away
A single dew-drop from the spray.
Ere yet a sunbeam, through the mist,
The castle-battlements had kiss'd,

The gates revolve, the drawbridge falls,
 And Arthur sallies from the walls.
 Doff'd his soft garb of Persia's loom,
 And steel from spur to helmet-plume,
 His Lybian steed full proudly trode,
 And joyful neigh'd beneath his load.
 The Monarch gave a passing sigh
 To penitence and pleasures by,
 When, lo! to his astonish'd ken
 Appear'd the form of Guendolen.

- ix. "Beyond the outmost wall she stood,
 Attired like huntress of the wood:
 Sandall'd her feet, her ankles bare,
 And eagle-plumage deck'd her hair;
 Firm was her look, her bearing bold,
 And in her hand a cup of gold.
 'Thou goest!' she said, 'and ne'er again
 Must we two meet, in joy or pain.
 Full fain would I this hour delay,
 Though weak the wish—yet, wilt thou stay?
 —No! thou look'st forward. Still attend,—
 Part we like lover and like friend,'
 She raised the cup—'Not this the juice
 The sluggish vines of earth produce;
 Pledge we, at parting, in the draught
 Which Genii love!'—she said, and quaff'd;
 And strange unwonted lustres fly
 From her flush'd cheek and sparkling eye.
- x. "The courteous Monarch bent him low,
 And, stooping down from saddlebow,
 Lifted the cup, in act to drink.
 A drop escaped the goblet's brink—
 Intense as liquid fire from hell,
 Upon the charger's neck it fell.
 Screaming with agony and fright,
 He bolted twenty feet upright—
 —The peasant still can show the dint,
 Where his hoofs lighted on the flint.—
 From Arthur's hand the goblet flew,
 Scattering a shower of fiery dew,
 That burn'd and blighted where it fell.
 The frantic steed rush'd up the dell,
 As whistles from the bow the reed;
 Nor bit nor rein could check his speed,
 Until he gain'd the hill;
 Then breath and sinew fail'd apace,
 And, reeling from the desperate race,
 He stood, exhausted, still.

The Monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed——
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky;
But, on the spot where once they frown'd,
The lonely streamlet brawl'd around
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted stone.
Musing on this strange hap the while,
The king wends back to fair Carlisle;
And cares, that cumber royal sway,
Wore memory of the past away.

- XI. " Full fifteen years, and more, were sped,
Each brought new wreaths to Arthur's head.
Twelve bloody fields, with glory fought,
The Saxons to subjection brought:
Rython, the mighty giant, slain
By his good brand, relieved Bretagne:
The Pictish Gillamore in fight,
And Roman Lucius, own'd his might;
And wide were through the world renown'd
The glories of his Table Round.
Each knight who sought adventurous fame,
To the bold court of Britain came,
And all who suffer'd causeless wrong,
From tyrant proud, or faitour strong,
Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
Nor there for aid implored in vain.

- XII. " For this the King, with pomp and pride,
Held solemn court at Whitsuntide,
And summon'd Prince and Peer,
All who owed homage for their land,
Or who craved knighthood from his hand,
Or who had succour to demand,
To come from far and near.
At such high tide, were glee and game
Mingled with feats of martial fame,
For many a stranger champion came,
In lists to break a spear;
And not a knight of Arthur's host,
Save that he trode some foreign coast,
But at this feast of Pentecost
Before him must appear.
Ah, Minstrels! when the Table Round
Arose, with all its warriors crown'd,
There was a theme for bards to sound
In triumph to their string!

Five hundred years are past and gone,
 But time shall draw his dying groan,
 Ere he behold the British throne
 Begirt with such a ring!

- XIII. "The heralds named the appointed spot,
 As Caerleon or Camelot,
 Or Carlisle fair and free.
 At Penrith, now, the feast was set,
 And in fair Eamont's vale were met
 The flower of Chivalry.
 There Galaad sate with manly grace,
 Yet maiden meekness in his face;
 There Morolt of the iron mace,
 And love-lorn Tristrem there:
 And Dinadam with lively glance,
 And Lanval with the fairy lance,
 And Mordred with his look askance,
 Brunor and Bevidere.
 Why should I tell of numbers more?
 Sir Cay, Sir Banier, and Sir Bore,
 Sir Carodac the keen,
 The gentle Gawain's courteous lore,
 Hector de Mares and Pellinore,
 And Lancelot, that ever more
 Look'd stol'n-wise on the Queen.

- XIV. "When wine and mirth did most abound,
 And harpers play'd their blythest round,
 A shrilly trumpet shook the ground,
 And marshals clear'd the ring;
 A maiden, on a palfrey white,
 Heading a band of damsels bright,
 Paced through the circle, to alight
 And kneel before the King.
 Arthur, with strong emotion, saw
 Her graceful boldness check'd by awe,
 Her dress, like huntress of the wold,
 Her bow and baldric trapp'd with gold,
 Her sandall'd feet, her ankles bare,
 And the eagle-plume that deck'd her hair.
 Graceful her veil she backward flung—
 The King, as from his seat he sprung,
 Almost cried, 'Guendolen!'
 But 'twas a face more frank and wild,
 Betwixt the woman and the child,
 Where less of magic beauty smiled
 Than of the race of men;
 And in the forehead's haughty grace,

The lines of Britain's royal race,
Pendragon's you might ken.

xv. "Faltering, yet gracefully, she said—
 'Great Prince! behold an orphan maid,
 In her departed mother's name,
 A father's vow'd protection claim!
 The vow was sworn in desert lone,
 In the deep valley of St. John.'
 At once the King the suppliant raised,
 And kiss'd her brow, her beauty praised;
 His vow, he said, should well be kept,
 Ere in the sea the sun was dipp'd,—
 Then, conscious, glanced upon his queen;
 But she, unruffled at the scene
 Of human frailty, construed mild,
 Look'd upon Lancelot and smiled.

xvi. " 'Up! up! each knight of gallant crest
 Take buckler, spear, and brand!
 He that to-day shall bear him best,
 Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
 And Arthur's daughter, when a bride,
 Shall bring a noble dower;
 Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged wide,
 And Carlisle town and tower.
 Then might you hear each valiant knight,
 To page and squire that cried,
 'Bring my armour bright, and my courser wight!
 'Tis not each day that a warrior's might,
 May win a royal bride.
 Then cloaks and caps of maintenance
 In haste aside they fling;
 The helmets glance, and gleams the lance,
 And the steel-weaved hauberks ring.
 Small care had they of their peaceful array,
 They might gather it that wolde;
 For brake and bramble glitter'd gay,
 With pearls and cloth of gold.

xvii. "Within trumpet sound of the Table Round
 Were fifty champions free,
 And they all arise to fight that prize,—
 They all arise but three.
 Nor love's fond troth, nor wedlock's oath,
 One gallant could withhold,
 For priests will allow of a broken vow,
 For penance or for gold.
 But sigh and glance from ladies bright

Among the troop were thrown,
 To plead their right, and true-love plight,
 And 'plain of honour flown.
 The knights they busied them so fast,
 With buckling spur and belt,
 That sigh and look, by ladies cast,
 Were neither seen nor felt.
 From pleading, or upbraiding glance,
 Each gallant turns aside,
 And only thought, 'If speeds my lance,
 A queen becomes my bride!
 She has fair Strath-Clyde, and Reged wide,
 And Carlisle tower and town;
 She is the loveliest maid, beside,
 That ever heir'd a crown.'
 So in haste their coursers they bestride,
 And strike their visors down.

- XVIII. "The champions, arm'd in martial sort,
 Have throng'd into the list,
 And but three knights of Arthur's court
 Are from the tourney miss'd.
 And still these lovers' fame survives
 For faith so constant shown,—
 There were two who loved their neighbours' wives,
 And one who loved his own.
 The first was Lancelot de Lac,
 The second Tristrem bold,
 The third was valiant Carodac,
 Who won the cup of gold,
 What time, of all King Arthur's crew,
 (Thereof came jeer and laugh,)
 He, as the mate of lady true,
 Alone the cup could quaff.
 Though envy's tongue would fain surmise,
 That but for very shame,
 Sir Carodac, to fight that prize,
 Had given both cup and dame;
 Yet, since but one of that fair court
 Was true to wedlock's shrine,
 Brand him who will with base report,—
 He shall be free from mine.

- XIX. "Now caracoled the steeds in air,
 Now plumes and pennons wanton'd fair,
 As all around the lists so wide
 In panoply the champions ride.
 King Arthur saw with startled eye,
 The flower of chivalry march by,

The bulwark of the Christian creed,
The kingdom's shield in hour of need.
Too late he thought him of the woe
Might from their civil conflict flow;
For well he knew they would not part
Till cold was many a gallant heart.
His hasty vow he 'gan to rue,
And Gyneth then apart he drew;
To her his leading-staff resign'd,
But added caution grave and kind.

- xx. " 'Thou see'st, my child, as promise-bound,
I bid the trump for tourney sound.
Take thou my warder as the queen
And umpire of the martial scene;
But mark thou this:—as Beauty bright
Is polar star to valiant knight,
As at her word his sword he draws,
His fairest guerdon her applause,
So gentle maid should never ask
Of knighthood vain and dangerous task;
And Beauty's eyes should ever be
Like the twin stars that soothe the sea,
And Beauty's breath shall whisper peace,
And bid the storm of battle cease.
I tell thee this, lest all too far,
These knights urge tourney into war.
Blithe at the trumpet let them go,
And fairly counter blow for blow;—
No striplings these, who succour need
For a razed helm or falling steed.
But, Gyneth, when the strife grows warm,
And threatens death or deadly harm,
Thy sire entreats, thy king commands,
Thou drop the warder from thy hands.
Trust thou thy father with thy fate,
Doubt not he choose thee fitting mate;
Nor be it said, through Gyneth's pride
A rose of Arthur's chaplet died.'

- xxi. " A proud and discontented glow
O'ershadowed Gyneth's brow of snow;
She put the warder by:—
'Reserve thy boon, my liege,' she said,
'Thus chaffer'd down and limited,
Debased and narrow'd for a maid
Of less degree than I.
No petty chief, but holds his heir
At a more honour'd price and rare

Than Britain's King holds me!
 Although the sun-burn'd maid, for dower,
 Has but her father's rugged tower,
 His barren hill and lee.—
 King Arthur swore, "By crown and sword,
 As belted knight and Britain's lord,
 That a whole summer's day should strive
 His knights, the bravest knights alive!"
 Recall thine oath! and to her glen
 Poor Gyneth can return agen;
 Not on thy daughter will the stain,
 That soils thy sword and crown remain.
 But think not she will e'er be bride
 Save to the bravest, proved and tried;
 Pendragon's daughter will not fear
 For clashing sword or splinter'd spear,
 Nor shrink though blood should flow;
 And all too well sad Guendolen
 Hath taught the faithlessness of men,
 That child of hers should pity, when
 Their meed they undergo.'—

xxii. "He frown'd and sigh'd, the Monarch bold:—
 'I give—what I may not withhold;
 For, not for danger, dread, or death,
 Must British Arthur break his faith.
 Too late I mark, thy mother's art
 Hath taught thee this relentless part.
 I blame her not, for she had wrong,
 But not to these my faults belong.
 Use, then, the warder as thou wilt;
 But trust me, that, if life be spilt,
 In Arthur's love, in Arthur's grace,
 Gyneth shall lose a daughter's place.'
 With that he turn'd his head aside,
 Nor brook'd to gaze upon her pride,
 As, with the truncheon raised, she sate
 The arbitress of mortal fate;
 Nor brook'd to mark, in ranks disposed,
 How the bold champions stood opposed,
 For shrill the trumpet-flourish fell
 Upon his ear like passing bell!
 Then first from sight of martial fray
 Did Britain's hero turn away.

xxiii. "But Gyneth heard the clangour high,
 As hears the hawk the partridge cry.
 Oh, blame her not! the blood was hers,
 That at the trumpet's summons stirs!—

And e'en the gentlest female eye
Might the brave strife of chivalry
 A while untroubled view;
So well accomplish'd was each knight,
To strike and to defend in fight,
Their meeting was a goodly sight,
 While plate and mail held true.
The lists with painted plumes were strown,
Upon the wind at random thrown,
But helm and breastplate bloodless shone,
It seem'd their feather'd crests alone
 Should this encounter rue.
And ever, as the combat grows,
The trumpet's cheery voice arose,
Like lark's shrill song the flourish flows,
Heard while the gale of April blows
 The merry greenwood through.

xxiv. "But soon to earnest grew their game,
The spears drew blood, the swords struck flame,
And, horse and man, to ground there came
 Knights, who shall rise no more!
Gone was the pride the war that graced,
Gay shields were cleft, and crests defaced,
And steel coats riven, and helms unbraced,
 And pennons stream'd with gore.
Gone, too, were fence and fair array,
And desperate strength made deadly way
At random through the bloody fray,
And blows were dealt with headlong sway,
 Unheeding where they fell;
And now the trumpet's clamours seem
Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing scream,
Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulfling stream,
 The sinking seaman's knell!

xxv. "Seem'd in this dismal hour, that Fate
Would Camlan's ruin antedate,
 And spare dark Mordred's crime;
Already gasping on the ground
Lie twenty of the Table Round,
 Of chivalry the prime.
Arthur, in anguish, tore away
From head and beard his tresses grey,
And she, proud Gyneth, felt dismay,
 And quaked with ruth and fear;
But still she deem'd her mother's shade
Hung o'er the tumult, and forbade
The sign that had the slaughter staid,

And chid the rising tear.
 Then Brunor, Taulas, Mador, fell,
 Helias the White, and Lionel,
 And many a champion more;
 Rochemont and Dinadam are down,
 And Ferrand of the Forest Brown
 Lies gasping in his gore.
 Vanoc, by mighty Morolt press'd
 Even to the confines of the list,
 Young Vanoc of the beardless face,
 (Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's race,)
 O'erpower'd at Gyneth's footstool bled,
 His heart's-blood dyed her sandals red.
 But then the sky was overcast,
 Then howl'd at once a whirlwind's blast,
 And, rent by sudden throes,
 Yawn'd in mid lists the quaking earth,
 And from the gulf,—tremendous birth!—
 The form of Merlin rose.

XXVI. " Sternly the Wizard Prophet eyed
 The dreary lists with slaughter dyed,
 And sternly raised his hand:—
 ' Madmen,' he said, ' your strife forbear;
 And thou, fair cause of mischief, hear
 The doom thy fates demand!
 Long shall close in stony sleep
 Eyes for ruth that would not weep;
 Iron lethargy shall seal
 Heart that pity scorn'd to feel.
 Yet, because thy mother's art
 Warp'd thine unsuspecting heart,
 And for love of Arthur's race,
 Punishment is blent with grace,
 Thou shalt bear thy penance lone
 In the Valley of Saint John,
 And this weird shall overtake thee;
 Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,
 For feats of arms as far renown'd
 As warrior of the Table Round.
 Long endurance of thy slumber
 Well may teach the world to number
 All their woes from Gyneth's pride,
 When the Red Cross champions died.'

XXVII. " As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's eye
 Slumber's load begins to lie;
 Fear and anger vainly strive
 Still to keep its light alive.

Twice, with effort and with pause,
O'er her brow her hand she draws;
Twice her strength in vain she tries,
From the fatal chair to rise,
Merlin's magic doom is spoken,
Vanoc's death must now be wroken.
Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
Curtaining each azure ball,
Slowly as on summer eves
Violets fold their dusky leaves.
The weighty baton of command
Now bears down her sinking hand,
On her shoulder droops her head;
Net of pearl and golden thread,
Bursting, gave her locks to flow
O'er her arm and breast of snow.
And so lovely seem'd she there,
Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
That her angry sire, repenting,
Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
And the champions, for her sake,
Would again the contest wake;
Till, in necromantic night,
Gyneth vanish'd from their sight.

XXVIII. " Still she bears her weird alone,
In the Valley of Saint John;
And her semblance oft will seem,
Mingling in a champion's dream,
Of her weary lot to 'plain,
And crave his aid to burst her chain.
While her wondrous tale was new,
Warriors to her rescue drew,
East and west, and south and north,
From the Liffy, Thames, and Forth.
Most have sought in vain the glen,
Tower nor castle could they ken;
Not at every time or tide,
Nor by every eye, descried.
Fast and vigil must be borne,
Many a night in watching worn,
Ere an eye of mortal powers
Can discern those magic towers.
Of the persevering few,
Some from hopeless task withdrew,
When they read the dismal threat
Graved upon the gloomy gate.
Few have braved the yawning door,
And those few return'd no more.

In the lapse of time forgot,
Wellnigh lost is Gyneth's lot;
Sound her sleep as in the tomb,
Till waken'd by the trump of doom."

END OF LYULPH'S TALE

- I. Here pause my tale; for all too soon,
My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
Already from thy lofty dome
Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
And each, to kill the goodly day
That God has granted them, his way
Of lazy sauntering has sought;
Lordlings and witlings not a few,
Incapable of doing aught,
Yet ill at ease with nought to do.
Here is no longer place for me;
For, Lucy, thou wouldst blush to see
Some phantom, fashionably thin,
With limb of lath and kerchief'd chin,
And lounging gape, or sneering grin,
Steal sudden on our privacy.
And how should I, so humbly born,
Endure the graceful spectre's scorn?
Faith! ill, I fear, while conjuring wand
Of English oak is hard at hand.

- II. Or grant the hour be all too soon
For Hessian boot and pantaloon,
And grant the lounge seldom strays
Beyond the smooth and gravell'd maze,
Laud we the gods, that Fashion's train
Holds hearts of more adventurous strain.
Artists are hers, who scorn to trace
Their rules from Nature's boundless grace,
But their right paramount assert
To limit her by pedant art,
Damning whate'er of vast and fair
Exceeds a canvas three feet square.
This thicket, for their *gumption* fit,
May furnish such a happy *bit*.
Bards, too, are hers, wont to recite
Their own sweet lays by waxen light,
Half in the salver's tingle drown'd,
While the *chasse-café* glides around;
And such may hither secret stray,

To labour an extempore:
Or sportsman, with his boisterous hollo
May here his wiser spaniel follow,
Or stage-struck Juliet may presume
To choose this bower for tiring-room;
And we alike must shun regard,
From painter, player, sportsman, bard.
Insects that skim in Fashion's sky,
Wasp, blue-bottle, or butterfly,
Lucy, have all alarms for us,
For all can hum and all can buzz.

- III. But oh, my Lucy say how long
We still must dread this trifling throng,
And stoop to hide, with coward art,
The genuine feelings of the heart!
No parents thine whose just command
Should rule their child's obedient hand;
Thy guardians, with contending voice,
Press each his individual choice.
And which is Lucy's?—Can it be
That puny fop, trimm'd cap-a-pee,
Who loves in the saloon to show
The arms that never knew a foe;
Whose sabre trails along the ground,
Whose legs in shapeless boots are drown'd;
A new Achilles, sure,—the steel
Fled from his breast to fence his heel;
One, for the simple manly grace
That wont to deck our martial race,
Who comes in foreign trashery
Of tinkling chain and spur,
A walking haberdashery,
Of feathers, lace, and fur:
In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
Horse-milliner of modern days?

- IV. Or is it he, the wordy youth,
So early train'd for statesman's part,
Who talks of honour, faith, and truth,
As themes that he has got by heart;
Whose ethics Chesterfield can teach,
Whose logic is from Single-speech;¹
Who scorns the meanest thought to vent,
Save in the phrase of Parliament;
Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
Calls "order," and "divides the house,"

¹ See *Parliamentary Logic, etc.*, by the Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton (1808), commonly called "Single-Speech Hamilton."

Who "craves permission to reply,"
 Whose "noble friend is in his eye;"
 Whose loving tender some have reckon'd
 A *motion*, you should gladly *second*?

- v. What, neither? Can there be a third,
 To such resistless swains preferr'd?—
 O why, my Lucy, turn aside,
 With that quick glance of injured pride?
 Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
 That alter'd and resentful air.
 Were all the wealth of Russel mine,
 And all the rank of Howard's line,
 All would I give for leave to dry
 That dewdrop trembling in thine eye.
 Think not I fear such fops can wile
 From Lucy more than careless smile;
 But yet if wealth and high degree
 Give gilded counters currency,
 Must I not fear, when rank and birth
 Stamp the pure ore of genuine worth?
 Nobles there are, whose martial fires
 Rival the fame that raised their sires,
 And patriots, skill'd through storms of fate
 To guide and guard the reeling state.
 Such, such there are—If such should come,
 Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
 Self-exiled seek some distant shore,
 And mourn till life and grief are o'er.

- vi. What sight, what signal of alarm,
 That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm?
 Or is it, that the rugged way
 Makes Beauty lean on lover's stay?
 Oh, no! for on the vale and brake,
 Nor sight nor sounds of danger wake,
 And this trim sward of velvet green,
 Were carpet for the Fairy Queen.
 That pressure slight was but to tell,
 That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
 And fain would banish from his mind
 Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

- vii. But wouldst thou bid the demons fly
 Like mist before the dawning sky,
 There is but one resistless spell—
 Say, wilt thou guess, or must I tell?
 'Twere hard to name, in minstrel phrase,
 A landaulet and four blood-bays,

But bards agree this wizard band
Can but be bound in Northern land.
'Tis there—nay, draw not back thy hand!—
'Tis there this slender finger round
Must golden amulet be bound,
Which, bless'd with many a holy prayer,
Can change to rapture lovers' care,
And doubt and jealousy shall die,
And fears give place to ecstasy.

- VIII. Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long
Has been thy lover's tale and song.
O, why so silent, love, I pray?
Have I not spoke the livelong day?
And will not Lucy deign to say
One word her friend to bless?
I ask but one—a simple sound,
Within three little letters bound,
O, let the word be YES!

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

- I. Long loved, long woo'd, and lately won,
My life's best hope, and now mine own!
Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
Recall our favourite haunts agen?
A wild resemblance we can trace,
Though reft of every softer grace,
As the rough warrior's brow may bear
A likeness to a sister fair.
Full well advised our Highland host,
That this wild pass on foot be cross'd,
While round Ben-Cruach's mighty base
Wheel the slow steeds and lingering chaise,
The keen old carle, with Scottish pride,
He praised his glen and mountains wide;
An eye he bears for nature's face,
Ay, and for woman's lovely grace.
Even in such mean degree we find
The subtle Scot's observing mind;
For, nor the chariot nor the train
Could gape of vulgar wonder gain,
But when old Allan would expound
Of Beal-na-paish ¹ the Celtic sound.
His bonnet doff'd, and bow, applied
His legend to my bonny bride;

¹ Beal-na-paish, the Vale of the Bridal.

While Lucy blush'd beneath his eye,
Courteous and cautious, shrewd and sly.

- II. Enough of him.—Now, ere we lose,
Plunged in the vale, the distant views,
Turn thee, my love! look back once more
To the blue lake's retiring shore.
On its smooth breast the shadows seem
Like objects in a morning dream,
What time the slumberer is aware
He sleeps, and all the vision's air:
Even so, on yonder liquid lawn,
In hues of bright reflection drawn,
Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky;
The summer-clouds so plain we note,
That we might count each dappled spot:
We gaze and we admire, yet know
The scene is all delusive show.
Such dreams of bliss would Arthur draw,
When first his Lucy's form he saw;
Yet sigh'd and sicken'd as he drew,
Despairing they could ere prove true!

- III. But, Lucy, turn thee now, to view
Up the fair glen, our destined way:
The fairy path that we pursue,
Distinguish'd but by greener hue,
Winds round the purple braise,
While Alpine flowers of varied dye
For carpet serve, or tapestry.
See how the little runnels leap,
In threads of silver, down the steep,
To swell the brooklet's moan!
Seems that the Highland Naiad grieves,
Fantastic while her crown she weaves,
Of rowan, birch, and alder leaves,
So lovely, and so lone.
There's no illusion there; these flowers,
That wailing brook, these lovely bowers,
Are, Lucy, all our own;
And, since thine Arthur call'd thee wife,
Such seems the prospect of his life,
A lovely path, on-winding still,
By gurgling brook and sloping hill.
'Tis true, that mortals cannot tell
What waits them in the distant dell;
But be it hap, or be it harm,
We tread the pathway arm in arm.

- iv. And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou why
I could thy bidding twice deny,
When twice you pray'd I would again
Resume the legendary strain
Of the bold knight of Triermain?
At length yon peevish vow you swore,
That you would sue to me no more,
Until the minstrel fit drew near,
And made me prize a listening ear.
But, loveliest, when thou first didst pray
Continuance of the knightly lay,
Was it not on the happy day
That made thy hand mine own?
When, dizzied with mine ecstasy,
Nought past, or present, or to be,
Could I or think on, hear, or see,
Save, Lucy, thee alone!
A giddy draught my rapture was,
As ever chemist's magic gas.
- v. Again the summons I denied
In yon fair capital of Clyde:
My Harp—or let me rather choose
The good old classic form—my Muse,
(For Harp's an over-scuted phrase,
Worn out by bards of modern days,)
My Muse, then—seldom will she wake,
Save by dim wood and silent lake;
She is the wild and rustic Maid,
Whose foot unsandall'd loves to tread
Where the soft greensward is inlaid
With varied moss and thyme;
And, lest the simple lily-braid,
That coronets her temples, fade,
She hides her still in greenwood shade,
To meditate her rhyme.
- vi. And now she comes! The murmur dear
Of the wild brook hath caught her ear,
The glade hath won her eye;
She longs to join with each blithe rill
That dances down the Highland hill,
Her blither melody.
And now, my Lucy's way to cheer,
She bids Ben-Cruach's echoes hear
How closed the tale, my love whilerc
Loved for its chivalry.
List how she tells, in notes of flame,
"Child Roland to the dark tower came!"

CANTO THIRD

- I. Bewcastle now must keep the Hold,
 Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
 Must only shoot from battled wall;
And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
 And Teviot now may belt the brand,
Taras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
 And Eskdale foray Cumberland.
Of wasted fields and plundered flocks
 The Borderers bootless may complain;
They lack the sword of brave de Vaux,
 There comes no aid from Triermain.
That lord, on high adventure bound,
 Hath wander'd forth alone,
And day and night keeps watchful round
 In the valley of Saint John.
- II. When first began his vigil bold,
The moon twelve summer nights was old,
 And shone both fair and full;
High in the vault of cloudless blue,
O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she threw
 Her light composed and cool.
Stretch'd on the brown hill's heathy breast,
 Sir Roland eyed the vale;
Chief where, distinguish'd from the rest,
Those clustering rocks uprear'd their crest,
The dwelling of the fair distress'd,
 As told grey Lyulph's tale.
Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
Was quivering on his armour bright,
 In beams that rose and fell,
And danced upon his buckler's boss,
That lay beside him on the moss,
 As on a crystal well.
- III. Ever he watch'd, and oft he deem'd,
While on the mound the moonlight stream'd,
 It alter'd to his eyes;
Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan change
To buttress'd walls their shapeless range,
Fain think, by transmutation strange,
 He saw grey turrets rise.
But scarce his heart with hope throbb'd high,
Before the wild illusions fly,

Which fancy had conceived,
Abetted by an anxious eye
That long'd to be deceived.
It was a fond deception all,
Such as, in solitary hall,
Beguiles the musing eye,
When, gazing on the sinking fire,
Bulwark, and battlement, and spire,
In the red gulf we spy.
For, seen by moon of middle night,
Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
Or by the dawn of morning light,
Or evening's western flame,
In every tide, at every hour,
In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
The rocks remain'd the same.

- iv. Oft has he traced the charmed mound,
Oft climb'd its crest, or paced it round,
Yet nothing might explore,
Save that the crags so rudely piled,
At distance seen, resemblance wild
To a rough fortress bore.
Yet still his watch the Warrior keeps,
Feeds hard and spare, and seldom sleeps,
And drinks but of the well;
Ever by day he walks the hill,
And when the evening gale is chill,
He seeks a rocky cell,
Like hermit poor to bid his bead,
And tell his Ave and his Creed,
Invoking every saint at need,
For aid to burst his spell.
- v. And now the moon her orb has hid,
And dwindled to a silver thread,
Dim seen in middle heaven,
While o'er its curve careering fast,
Before the fury of the blast
The midnight clouds are driven.
The brooklet raved, for on the hills
The upland showers had swoln the rills,
And down the torrents came;
Mutter'd the distant thunder dread,
And frequent o'er the vale was spread
A sheet of lightning flame.
De Vaux, within his mountain cave,
(No human step the storm durst brave,)
To moody meditation gave

Each faculty of soul,
 Till, lull'd by distant torrent sound,
 And the sad winds that whistled round,
 Upon his thoughts, in musing drown'd,
 A broken slumber stole.

- VI. 'Twas then was heard a heavy sound,
 (Sound, strange and fearful there to hear,
 'Mongst desert hills, where, leagues around,
 Dwelt but the gorcock and the deer:)
 As, starting from his couch of fern,
 Again he heard in clangor stern,
 That deep and solemn swell,—
 Twelve times, in measured tone, it spoke,
 Like some proud minster's pealing clock,
 Or city's larum-bell.
 What thought was Roland's first when fell,
 In that deep wilderness, the knell
 Upon his startled ear?
 To slander warrior were I loth,
 Yet must I hold my minstrel troth,—
 It was a thought of fear.

- VII. But lively was the mingled thrill
 That chased that momentary chill,
 For Love's keen wish was there,
 And eager Hope, and Valour high,
 And the proud glow of Chivalry,
 That burn'd to do and dare.
 Forth from the cave the Warrior rush'd,
 Long ere the mountain-voice was hush'd,
 That answer'd to the knell;
 For long and far the unwonted sound,
 Eddying in echoes round and round,
 Was toss'd from fell to fell;
 And Glaramara answer flung,
 And Grisdale-pike responsive rung,
 And Legbert heights their echoes swung,
 As far as Derwent's dell.

- VIII. Forth upon trackless darkness gazed
 The Knight, bedeaften'd and amazed,
 Till all was hush'd and still,
 Save the swoln torrent's sullen roar,
 And the night-blast that wildly bore
 Its course along the hill.
 Then on the northern sky there came
 A light, as of reflected flame,
 And over Legbert-head,

As if by magic art controll'd,
 A mighty meteor slowly roll'd
 Its orb of fiery red;
 Thou wouldst have thought some demon dire
 Came mounted on that car of fire,
 To do his errant dread.
 Far on the sloping valley's course,
 On thicket, rock, and torrent hoarse,
 Shingle and Scrae,¹ and Fell and Force,²
 A dusky light arose:
 Display'd, yet alter'd was the scene;
 Dark rock, and brook of silver sheen,
 Even the gay thicket's summer green,
 In bloody tincture glows.

- ix. De Vaux had mark'd the sunbeams set,
 At eve, upon the coronet
 Of that enchanted mound,
 And seen but crags at random flung,
 That, o'er the brawling torrent hung,
 In desolation frown'd.
 What sees he by that meteor's lour?—
 A banner'd Castle, keep, and tower,
 Return the lurid gleam,
 With battled walls and buttress fast,
 And barbican³ and ballium⁴ vast,
 And airy flanking towers, that cast
 Their shadows on the stream.
 'Tis no deceit!—distinctly clear
 Crenell⁵ and parapet appear,
 While o'er the pile that meteor drear
 Makes momentary pause;
 Then forth its solemn path it drew,
 And fainter yet and fainter grew
 Those gloomy towers upon the view,
 As its wild light withdraws.
- x. Forth from the cave did Roland rush,
 O'er crag and stream, through brier and bush,
 Yet far he had not sped,
 Ere sunk was that portentous light
 Behind the hills, and utter night
 Was on the valley spread.
 He paused perforce, and blew his horn,
 And, on the mountain-echoes borne,
 Was heard an answering sound,

¹ Bank of loose stones.

² Waterfall.

³ The outer defence of the castle gate.

⁴ Fortified court.

⁵ Apertures for shooting arrows.

A wild and lonely trumpet-note,—
 In middle air it seem'd to float
 High o'er the battled mound;
 And sounds were heard, as when a guard,
 Of some proud castle, holding ward,
 Pace forth their nightly round.
 The valiant Knight of Triermain
 Rung forth his challenge-blast again,
 But answer came there none;
 And 'mid the mingled wind and rain,
 Darkling he sought the vale in vain,
 Until the dawning shone;
 And when it dawn'd, that wondrous sight,
 Distinctly seen by meteor light,
 It all had pass'd away!
 And that enchanted mount once more
 A pile of granite fragments bore,
 As at the close of day.

- xI. Steel'd for the deed, De Vaux's heart,
 Scorn'd from his ventrous quest to part,
 He walks the vale once more;
 But only sees, by night or day,
 That shatter'd pile of rocks so grey,
 Hears but the torrent's roar.
 Till when, through hills of azure borne,
 The moon renew'd her silver horn,
 Just at the time her waning ray
 Had faded in the dawning day,
 A summer mist arose;
 Adown the vale the vapours float,
 And cloudy undulations moat
 That tufted mound of mystic note,
 As round its base they close.
 And higher now the fleecy tide
 Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
 Until the airy billows hide
 The rock's majestic isle;
 It seem'd a veil of filmy lawn,
 By some fantastic fairy drawn
 Around enchanted pile.

- xII. The breeze came softly down the brook,
 And, sighing as it blew,
 The veil of silver mist it shook,
 And to De Vaux's eager look
 Renew'd that wondrous view.
 For, though the loitering vapour braved
 The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved

Its mantle's dewy fold;
And still, when shook that filmy screen,
Were towers and bastions dimly seen,
And Gothic battlements between
Their gloomy length unroll'd.
Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on thine eye
Once more the fleeting vision die!

—The gallant knight 'gan speed
As prompt and light as, when the hound
Is opening, and the horn is wound,
Careers the hunter's steed.

Down the steep dell his course amain
Hath rivall'd archer's shaft;
But ere the mound he could attain,
The rocks their shapeless form regain,
And, mocking loud his labour vain,
The mountain spirits laugh'd.

Far up the echoing dell was born
Their wild unearthly shout of scorn.

- XIII. Wroth wax'd the Warrior.—“ Am I then
Fool'd by the enemies of men,
Like a poor hind, whose homeward way
Is haunted by malicious fay?
Is Triermain become your taunt,
De Vaux your scorn? False fiends, avaunt! ”
A weighty curtal-axe he bare;
The baleful blade so bright and square,
And the tough shaft of heben wood,
Were oft in Scottish gore imbrued.
Backward his stately form he drew,
And at the rocks the weapon threw,
Just where one crag's projected crest
Hung proudly balanced o'er the rest.
Hurl'd with main force, the weapon's shock
Rent a huge fragment of the rock.
If by mere strength, 'twere hard to tell,
Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
But down the headlong ruin came,
With cloud of dust and flash of flame.
Down bank, o'er bush, its course was borne,
Crush'd lay the copse, the earth was torn,
Till staid at length, the ruin dread
Cumber'd the torrent's rocky bed,
And bade the waters' high-swoln tide
Seek other passage for its pride.

- XIV. When ceased that thunder, Triermain
Survey'd the mound's rude front again;

And, lo! the ruin had laid bare,
 Hewn in the stone, a winding stair,
 Whose moss'd and fractured steps might lend
 The means the summit to ascend;
 And by whose aid the brave De Vaux
 Began to scale these magic rocks,
 And soon a platform won,
 Where, the wild witchery to close,
 Within three lances' length arose
 The Castle of Saint John!
 No misty phantom of the air,
 No meteor-blazon'd show was there;
 In morning splendour, full and fair,
 The massive fortress shone.

- xv. Embattled high and proudly tower'd,
 Shaded by pond'rous flankers, lower'd
 The portal's gloomy way.
 Though for six hundred years and more,
 Its strength had brook'd the tempest's roar,
 The scutcheon'd emblems which it bore
 Had suffer'd no decay:
 But from the eastern battlement
 A turret had made sheer descent,
 And, down in recent ruin rent,
 In the mid torrent lay.
 Else, o'er the Castle's brow sublime,
 Insults of violence or of time
 Unfelt had pass'd away.
 In shapeless characters of yore,
 The gate this stern inscription bore:—

INSCRIPTION

- xvi. "Patience waits the destined day,
 Strength can clear the cumber'd way.
 Warrior, who hast waited long,
 Firm of soul, of sinew strong,
 It is given thee to gaze
 On the pile of ancient days.
 Never mortal builder's hand
 This enduring fabric plann'd;
 Sign and sigil, word of power,
 From the earth raised keep and tower.
 View it o'er, and pace it round,
 Rampart, turret, battled mound.
 Dare no more! To cross the gate
 Were to tamper with thy fate;
 Strength and fortitude were vain,
 View it o'er—and turn again."—

- XVII. "That would I," said the Warrior bold,
"If that my frame were bent and old,
And my thin blood dropp'd slow and cold
 As icicle in thaw;
But while my heart can feel it dance,
Blithe as the sparkling wine of France,
And this good arm wields sword or lance,
 I mock these words of awe!"
He said; the wicket felt the sway
Of his strong hand, and straight gave way,
And, with rude crash and jarring bray,
 The rusty bolts withdraw;
But o'er the threshold as he strode,
And forward took the vaulted road,
An unseen arm, with force amain,
The ponderous gate flung close again,
 And rusted bolt and bar
Spontaneous took their place once more,
While the deep arch with sullen roar
 Return'd their surly jar.
"Now closed is the gin and the prey within
 By the Rood of Lanercost!
But he that would win the war-wolf's skin,
 May rue him of his boast."
Thus muttering, on the Warrior went,
By dubious light down steep descent.
- XVIII. Unbarr'd, unlock'd, unwatch'd, a port
Led to the Castle's outer court:
There the main fortress, broad and tall,
Spread its long range of bower and hall,
 And towers of varied size,
Wrought with each ornament extreme,
That Gothic art, in wildest dream
 Of fancy, could devise;
But full between the Warrior's way
And the main portal arch, there lay
 An inner moat;
 Nor bridge nor boat
Affords De Vaux the means to cross
The clear, profound, and silent fosse.
His arms aside in haste he flings,
Cuirass of steel and hauberk rings,
And down falls helm, and down the shield,
Rough with the dints of many a field.
Fair was his manly form, and fair
His keen dark eye, and close curl'd hair,
When, all unarm'd, save that the brand
Of well-proved metal graced his hand,

With nought to fence his dauntless breast
 But the close gipon's ¹ under-vest,
 Whose sullied buff the sable stains
 Of hauberk and of mail retains,—
 Roland De Vaux upon the brim
 Of the broad moat stood prompt to swim.

- xix. Accoutred thus he dared the tide,
 And soon he reach'd the farther side,
 And enter'd soon the Hold,
 And paced a hall, whose walls so wide
 Were blazon'd all with feats of pride,
 By warrior's done of old.
 In middle lists they counter'd here,
 While trumpets seem'd to blow;
 And there, in den or desert drear,
 They quell'd gigantic foe,
 Braved the fierce griffon in his ire,
 Or faced the dragon's breath of fire.
 Strange in their arms, and strange in face,
 Heroes they seem'd of ancient race,
 Whose deeds of arms, and race, and name,
 Forgotten long by later fame,
 Were here depicted, to appal
 Those of an age degenerate,
 Whose bold intrusion braved their fate
 In this enchanted hall.
 For some short space the venturous knight
 With these high marvels fed his sight,
 Then sought the chamber's upper end,
 Where three broad easy steps ascend
 To an arch'd portal door,
 In whose broad folding leaves of state
 Was framed a wicket window-grate,
 And, ere he ventured more,
 The gallant Knight took earnest view
 The grated wicket-window through.

- xx. O, for his arms! Of martial weed
 Had never mortal Knight such need!—
 He spied a stately gallery; all
 Of snow-white marble was the wall,
 The vaulting, and the floor;
 And, contrast strange! on either hand
 There stood array'd in sable band
 Four Maids whom Afric bore;
 And each a Lybian tiger led,
 Held by as bright and frail a thread

¹ A sort of doublet, worn beneath the armour.

As Lucy's golden hair,—
For the leash that bound these monsters dread
Was but of gossamer.
Each Maiden's short barbaric vest
Left all unclosed the knee and breast,
And limbs of shapely jet;
White was their vest and turban's fold,
On arms and ankles rings of gold
In savage pomp were set;
A quiver on their shoulders lay,
And in their hand an assagay.
Such and so silent stood they there,
That Roland wellnigh hoped
He saw a band of statues rare,
Station'd the gazer's soul to scare;
But when the wicket oped,
Each grisly beast 'gan upward draw,
Roll'd his grim eye, and spread his claw,
Scented the air, and licked his jaw;
While these weird Maids, in Moorish tongue,
A wild and dismal warning sung.

xxi. "Rash Adventurer, bear thee back!
Dread the spell of Dahomay!
Fear the race of Zaharak,
Daughters of the burning day!

"When the whirlwind's gusts are wheeling,
Ours it is the dance to braid;
Zarah's sands in pillars reeling,
Join the measure that we tread,
When the Moon has donn'd her cloak,
And the stars are red to see,
Shrill when pipes the sad Siroc,
Music meet for such as we.

"Where the shatter'd columns lie,
Showing Carthage once had been,
If the wandering Santon's eye
Our mysterious rites hath seen,—
Oft he cons the prayer of death,
To the nations preaches doom,
'Azrael's brand hath left the sheath!
Moslems, think upon the tomb!

"Ours the scorpion, ours the snake,
Ours the hydra of the fen,
Ours the tiger of the brake,
All that plague the sons of men.

Ours the tempest's midnight wrack,
 Pestilence that wastes by day—
 Dread the race of Zaharak!
 Fear the spell of Dahomay! "

xxii. Uncouth and strange the accents shrill
 Rung those vaulted roofs among,
 Long it was ere, faint and still,
 Died the far resounding song.
 While yet the distant echoes roll,
 The Warrior communed with his soul.
 " When first I took this venturous quest,
 I swore upon the rood,
 Neither to stop, nor turn, nor rest,
 For evil or for good.
 My forward path too well I ween,
 Lies yonder fearful ranks between!
 For man unarm'd, 'tis bootless hope
 With tigers and with fiends to cope—
 Yet, if I turn, what waits me there,
 Save famine dire and fell despair?—
 Other conclusion let me try,
 Since, choose howe'er I list, I die.
 Forward, lies faith and knightly fame;
 Behind, are perjury and shame.
 In life or death I hold my word! "
 With that he drew his trusty sword,
 Caught down a banner from the wall,
 And enter'd thus the fearful hall.

xxiii. On high each wayward Maiden threw
 Her swarthy arm, with wild halloo!
 On either side a tiger sprung—
 Against the leftward foe he flung
 The ready banner, to engage
 With tangling folds the brutal rage;
 The right-hand monster in mid air
 He struck so fiercely and so fair,
 Through gullet and through spinal bone,
 The trenchant blade had sheerly gone.
 His grisly brethren ramp'd and yell'd,
 But the slight leash their rage withheld,
 Whilst, 'twixt their ranks, the dangerous road
 Firmly, though swift, the champion strode.
 Safe to the gallery's bound he drew,
 Safe pass'd an open portal through;
 And when against pursuit he flung
 The gate, judge if the echoes rung!
 Onward his daring course he bore,

While, mix'd with dying growl and roar,
Wild jubilee and loud hurra
Pursued on his venturous way.

xxiv. "Hurra, hurra! Our watch is done!
We hail once more the tropic sun.
Pallid beams of northern day,
Farewell, farewell! Hurra, hurra!

"Five hundred years o'er this cold glen
Hath the pale sun come round agen;
Foot of man, till now, hath ne'er
Dared to cross the Hall of Fear.

"Warrior! thou, whose dauntless heart
Gives us from our ward to part,
Be as strong in future trial,
Where resistance is denial.

"Now for Afric's glowing sky,
Zwenga wide and Atlas high,
Zaharak and Dahomay!——
Mount the winds! Hurra, hurra!"

xxv. The wizard song at distance died,
As if in ether borne astray,
While through waste halls and chambers wide
The Knight pursued his steady way,
Till to a lofty dome he came,
That flash'd with such a brilliant flame,
As if the wealth of all the world
Were there in rich confusion hurl'd.
For here the gold, in sandy heaps,
With duller earth, incorporate, sleeps;
Was there in ingots piled, and there
Coin'd badge of empery it bare;
Yonder, huge bars of silver lay,
Dimm'd by the diamond's neighbouring ray,
Like the pale moon in morning day;
And in the midst four Maidens stand,
The daughters of some distant land.
Their hue was of the dark-red dye,
That fringes oft a thunder sky;
Their hands palmetto baskets bare,
And cotton fillets bound their hair;
Slim was their form, their mien was shy,
To earth they bent the humbled eye,
Folded their arms, and suppliant kneel'd,
And thus their proffer'd gifts reveal'd.

CHORUS

- xxvi. " See the treasures Merlin piled,
 Portion meet for Arthur's child.
 Bathe in Wealth's unbounded stream,
 Wealth that Avarice ne'er could dream! "

FIRST MAIDEN

" See these clots of virgin gold!
 Sever'd from the sparry mould,
 Nature's mystic alchemy
 In the mine thus bade them lie;
 And their orient smile can win
 Kings to stoop, and saints to sin.—

SECOND MAIDEN

" See these pearls, that long have slept:
 These were tears by Naiads wept
 For the loss of Marinel.
 Tritons in the silver shell
 Treasured them, till hard and white,
 As the teeth of Amphitrite."—

THIRD MAIDEN

" Does a livelier hue delight?
 Here are rubies blazing bright,
 Here the emerald's fairy green,
 And the topaz glows between;
 Here their varied hues unite,
 In the changeful chrysolite."—

FOURTH MAIDEN

" Leave these gems of poorer shine,
 Leave them all, and look on mine!
 While their glories I expand,
 Shade thine eyebrows with thy hand.
 Mid-day sun and diamond's blaze
 Blind the rash beholder's gaze."—

CHORUS

" Warrior, seize the splendid store;
 Would 'twere all our mountains bore!
 We should ne'er in future story,
 Read, Peru, thy perish'd glory! "

- xxvii. Calmly and unconcern'd, the Knight
 Waved aside the treasures bright:—
 " Gentle Maidens, rise, I pray!
 Bar not thus my destined way.

Let these boasted brilliant toys
Braid the hair of girls and boys!
Bid your streams of gold expand
O'er proud London's thirsty land.
De Vaux of wealth saw never need,
Save to purvey him arms and steed,
And all the ore he deign'd to hoard
Inlays his helm, and hilts his sword."
Thus gently parting from their hold,
He left, unmoved, the dome of gold.

- XXVIII. And now the morning sun was high,
De Vaux was weary, faint, and dry;
When, lo! a plashing sound he hears,
A gladsome signal that he hears
 Some frolic water-run;
And soon he reach'd a court-yard square,
Where, dancing in the sultry air,
Toss'd high aloft, a fountain fair .
 Was sparkling in the sun.
On right and left, a fair arcade,
In long perspective view display'd
Alleys and bowers, for sun or shade:
 But, full in front, a door,
Low-brow'd and dark, seem'd as it led
To the lone dwelling of the dead,
 Whose memory was no more.

- XXIX. Here stopp'd De Vaux an instant's space,
To bathe his parched lips and face,
 And mark'd with well-pleased eye,
Refracted on the fountain stream,
In rainbow hues the dazzling beam
 Of that gay summer sky.
His senses felt a mild control,
Like that which lulls the weary soul,
 From contemplation high
Relaxing, when the ear receives
The music that the greenwood leaves
 Make to the breezes' sigh.

- XXX. And oft in such a dreamy mood,
 The half-shut eye can frame
Fair apparitions in the wood
As if the nymphs of field and flood
 In gay procession came.
Are these of such fantastic mould,
 Seen distant down the fair arcade,
These Maids enlink'd in sister-fold,

Who, late at bashful distance staid,
 Now tripping from the greenwood shade,
 Nearer the musing champion draw,
 And, in a pause of seeming awe,
 Again stand doubtful now?—
 Ah, that sly pause of witching powers!
 That seems to say, "To please be ours,
 Be yours to tell us how."
 Their hue was of the golden glow
 That suns of Candahar bestow,
 O'er which in slight suffusion flows
 A frequent tinge of paly rose;
 Their limbs were fashion'd fair and free,
 In nature's justest symmetry;
 And, wreathed with flowers, with odours graced,
 Their raven ringlets reach'd the waist:
 In eastern pomp, in gilding pale
 The hennah lent each shapely nail,
 And the dark sumah gave the eye
 More liquid and more lustrous dye.
 The spotless veil of misty lawn,
 In studied disarrangement, drawn
 The form and bosom o'er,
 To win the eye, or tempt the touch,
 For modesty show'd all too much—
 Too much—yet promised more.

XXXI. "Gentle Knight, a while delay,"
 Thus they sung, "thy toilsome way,
 While we pay the duty due
 To our Master and to you.
 Over Avarice, over Fear,
 Love triumphant led thee here;
 Warrior, list to us, for we
 Are slaves to Love, are friends to thee.
 Though no treasured gems have we,
 To proffer on the bended knee,
 Though we boast nor arm nor heart,
 For the assagay or dart,
 Swains allow each simple girl
 Ruby lip and teeth of pearl;
 Or, if dangers more you prize,
 Flatterers find them in our eyes.

"Stay, then, gentle Warrior, stay,
 Rest till evening steal on day;
 Stay, O, stay!—in yonder bowers
 We will braid thy locks with flowers,
 Spread the feast and fill the wine,

Charm thy ear with sounds divine,
Weave our dances till delight
Yield to languor, day to night.
Then shall she you most approve,
Sing the lays that best you love,
Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
Till the weary night be o'er—
Gentle Warrior, wouldst thou more?
Wouldst thou more, fair Warrior,—she
Is slave to Love and slave to thee."

XXXII. O, do not hold it for a crime
In the bold hero of my rhyme,
For Stoic look,
And meet rebuke,
He lack'd the heart or time;
As round the band of sirens trip,
He kiss'd one damsel's laughing lip,
And press'd another's proffer'd hand.
Spoke to them all in accents bland,
But broke their magic circle through;
"Kind Maids," he said, "adieu, adieu!
My fate, my fortune, forward lies."
He said, and vanish'd from their eyes;
But, as he dared that darksome way,
Still heard behind their lovely lay:—
"Fair Flower of Courtesy, depart!
Go, where the feelings of the heart
With the warm pulse in concord move;
Go, where Virtue sanctions Love!"

XXXIII. Downward De Vaux through darksome ways
And ruin'd vaults has gone,
Till issue from their wilder'd maze,
Or safe retreat, seem'd none,—
And e'en the dismal path he strays
Grew worse as he went on.
For cheerful sun, for living air,
Foul vapours rise and mine-fires glare,
Whose fearful light the dangers show'd
That dogg'd him on that dreadful road.
Deep pits, and lakes of waters dun,
They show'd, but show'd not how to shun.
These scenes of desolate despair,
These smothering clouds of poison'd air,
How gladly had De Vaux exchanged,
Though 'twere to face yon tigers ranged!
Nay, soothful bards have said,

So perilous his state seem'd now,
 He wish'd him under arbour bough
 With Asia's willing maid.
 When, joyful sound! at distance near
 A trumpet flourish'd loud and clear,
 And as it ceased, a lofty lay
 Seem'd thus to chide his lagging way.

xxxiv. "Son of Honour, theme of story,
 Think on the reward before ye!
 Danger, darkness, toil despise;
 'Tis Ambition bids thee rise.

"He that would her heights ascend,
 Many a weary step must wend;
 Hand and foot and knee he tries;
 Thus Ambition's minions rise.

"Lag not now, though rough the way,
 Fortune's mood brooks no delay;
 Grasp the boon that's spread before ye,
 Monarch's power, and Conqueror's glory!"

It ceased. Advancing on the sound,
 A steep ascent the Wanderer found,
 And then a turret stair:
 Nor climb'd he far its steepy round
 Till fresher blew the air,
 And next a welcome glimpse was given,
 That cheer'd him with the light of heaven.
 At length his toil had won
 A lofty hall with trophies dress'd,
 Where as to greet imperial guest,
 Four Maidens stood, whose crimson vest
 Was bound with golden zone.

xxxv. Of Europe seem'd the damsels all;
 The first a nymph of lively Gaul,
 Whose easy step and laughing eye
 Her borrow'd air of awe belie;
 The next a maid of Spain,
 Dark-eyed, dark-hair'd, sedate, yet bold;
 White ivory skin and tress of gold
 Her shy and bashful comrade told
 For daughter of Almaine.
 These maidens bore a royal robe,
 With crown, with sceptre, and with globe,
 Emblems of empery;
 The fourth a space behind them stood,

And leant upon a harp, in mood
Of minstrel ecstasy.
Of merry England she, in dress
Like ancient British Druidess.
Her hair an azure fillet bound,
Her graceful vesture swept the ground,
And, in her hand display'd,
A crown did that fourth Maiden hold,
But unadorn'd with gems and gold,
Of glossy laurel made.

xxxvi. At once to brave De Vaux knelt down
These foremost Maidens three,
And proffer'd sceptre, robe, and crown,
Liegedom and seignorie,
O'er many a region wide and fair,
Destined, they said, for Arthur's heir;
But homage would he none:—
“Rather,” he said, “De Vaux would ride,
A Warden of the Border-side,
In plate and mail, than, robed in pride,
A monarch's empire own;
Rather, far rather, would he be
A free-born knight of England free,
Than sit on Despot's throne.”
So pass'd he on, when that fourth Maid,
As starting from a trance,
Upon the harp her finger laid;
Her magic touch the chords obey'd,
Their soul awaked at once!

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN

“Quake to your foundations deep,
Stately Towers, and Banner'd Keep,
Bid your vaulted echoes moan,
As the dreaded step they own.

“Fiends, that wait on Merlin's spell,
Hear the foot-fall! mark it well!
Spread your dusky wings abroad,
Boune ye for your homeward road!

“It is His, the first who e'er
Dared the dismal Hall of Fear;
His, who hath the snares defied
Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and Pride.

Quake to your foundations deep,
Bastion huge, and Turret steep!
Tremble, Keep! and totter, Tower!
This is Gyneth's waking hour.”

xxxvii. Thus while she sung, the venturous Knight
 Has reach'd a bower, where milder light
 Through crimson curtains fell;
 Such soften'd shade the hill receives,
 Her purple veil when twilight leaves
 Upon its western swell.
 That bower, the gazer to bewitch,
 Hath wondrous store of rare and rich
 As e'er was seen with eye;
 For there by magic skill, I wis,
 Form of each thing that living is
 Was limn'd in proper dye.
 All seem'd to sleep—the timid hare
 On form, the stag upon his lair,
 The eagle in her eyrie fair
 Between the earth and sky.
 But what of pictured rich and rare
 Could win De Vaux's eye-glance, where,
 Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,
 He saw King Arthur's child!
 Doubt, and anger, and dismay,
 From her brow had pass'd away,
 Forgot was that fell tourney-day,
 For, as she slept, she smiled:
 It seem'd, that the repentant Seer
 Her sleep of many a hundred year
 With gentle dreams beguiled.

xxxviii. That form of maiden loveliness,
 'Twixt childhood and 'twixt youth,
 That ivory chair, that silvan dress,
 The arms and ankles bare, express
 Of Lyulph's tale the truth.
 Still upon her garment's hem
 Vanoc's blood made purple gem,
 And the warder of command
 Cumber'd still her sleeping hand;
 Still her dark locks dishevell'd flow
 From net of pearl o'er breast of snow;
 And so fair the slumberer seems,
 That De Vaux impeach'd his dreams,
 Vapid all and void of might,
 Hiding half her charms from sight.
 Motionless a while he stands,
 Folds his arms and clasps his hands,
 Trembling in his fitful joy,
 Doubtful how he should destroy
 Long-enduring spell;
 Doubtful, too, when slowly rise

Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes,
 What these eyes shall tell.—
 "St. George! St. Mary! can it be,
 That they will kindly look on me!"

xxxix. Gently, lo! the Warrior kneels,
 Soft that lovely hand he steals,
 Soft to kiss, and soft to clasp—
 But the warder leaves his grasp;
 Lightning flashes, rolls the thunder!
 Gyneth startles from her sleep,
 Totters Tower, and trembles Keep,
 Burst the Castle-walls asunder!
 Fierce and frequent were the shocks,—
 Melt the magic halls away;
 — But beneath their mystic rocks,
 In the arms of bold De Vaux,
 Safe the princess lay;
 Safe and free from magic power,
 Blushing like the rose's flower
 Opening to the day;
 And round the Champion's brows were bound
 The crown that Druidess had wound,
 Of the green laurel-bay.
 And this was what remain'd of all
 The wealth of each enchanted hall,
 The Garland and the Dame:
 But where should Warrior seek the meed,
 Due to high worth for daring deed,
 Except from LOVE and FAME!

CONCLUSION

i. My Lucy, when the Maid is won,
 The Minstrel's task, thou know'st, is done;
 And to require of bard
 That to his dregs the tale should run,
 Were ordinance too hard.
 Our lovers, briefly be it said,
 Wedded as lovers wont to wed,
 When tale or play is o'er;
 Lived long and blest, loved fond and true,
 And saw a numerous race renew
 The honours that they bore.
 Know, too, that when a pilgrim strays,
 In morning mist or evening maze,
 Along the mountain lone,
 That fairy fortress often mocks

His gaze upon the castled rocks
 Of the Valley of St. John;
 But never man since brave De Vaux
 The charmed portal won.
 'Tis now a vain illusive show,
 That melts whene'er the sunbeams glow
 Or the fresh breeze hath blown.

- II. But see, my love, where far below
 Our lingering wheels are moving slow,
 The whiles, up-gazing still,
 Our menials eye our steepy way,
 Marvelling, perchance, what whim can stay
 Our steps, when eve is sinking grey,
 On this gigantic hill.
 So think the vulgar—Life and time
 Ring all their joys in one dull chime
 Of luxury and ease;
 And, O! beside these simple knaves,
 How many better born are slaves
 To such coarse joys as these,—
 Dead to the nobler sense that glows
 When nature's grander scenes uncloze!
 But, Lucy, we will love them yet,
 The mountain's misty coronet,
 The greenwood, and the wold;
 And love the more, that of their maze
 Adventure high of other days
 By ancient bards is told,
 Bringing, perchance, like my poor tale,
 Some moral truth in fiction's veil:
 Nor love them less, that o'er the hill
 The evening breeze, as now, comes chill;—
 My love shall wrap her warm,
 And, fearless of the slippery way,
 While safe she trips the heathy brae,
 Shall hang on Arthur's arm.

THE END OF TRIERMAIN

THE LORD OF THE ISLES

The scene of this Poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire; and, afterwards, in the islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rathlin on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy; and of Archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose *Metrical History of Robert Bruce* will soon, I trust, appear, under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.

ABBOTSFORD, 10th December, 1814.

CANTO FIRST

Autumn departs—but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropp'd with gold
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of silvan music swell,
The deep-toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill;
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's western fell.

Autumn departs—from Gala's fields no more
Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer;
Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest-home hath hush'd the clanging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of scatter'd grain.

Deem'st thou these sadden'd scenes have pleasure still,
Lovest thou through Autumn's fading realms to stray,
To see the heath-flower wither'd on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,

To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
 On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
 And moralise on mortal joy and pain?—
 O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel strain.

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
 Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
 Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
 That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky,
 And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
 When wild November hath his bugle wound;
 Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
 Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
 Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found.

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
 To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day;
 In distant lands, by the rough West reprov'd,
 Still live some relics of the ancient lay.
 For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
 With such the Seer of Skye the eve beguiles;
 'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
 In Harries known, and in Iona's piles,
 Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles.

-
- I. "Wake, Maid of Lorn!" the Minstrels sung,
 Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung,
 And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
 Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
 As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
 The diapason of the Deep.
 Lull'd were the winds on Inninmore,
 And green Loch-Alline's woodland shore,
 As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
 In listing to the lovely measure.
 And ne'er to symphony more sweet
 Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
 Since, met from mainland and from isle,
 Ross, Arran, Ilay, and Argyle,
 Each minstrel's tributary lay
 Paid homage to the festal day.
 Dull and dishonour'd were the bard,
 Worthless of guerdon and regard,
 Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
 Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
 Who on that morn's resistless call
 Were silent in Artonish hall.

- II. "Wake, Maid of Lorn!" 'twas thus they sung,
And yet more proud the descant rung,
"Wake, Maid of Lorn! high right is ours,
To charm dull sleep from Beauty's bowers;
Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so shy
But owns the power of minstrelsy.
In Lettermore the timid deer
Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear;
Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark;
To list his notes, the eagle proud
Will poise him on Ben-Cailliach's cloud;
Then let not Maiden's ear disdain
The summons of the minstrel train,
But, while our harps wild music make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake!
- III. "O wake, while Dawn, with dewy shine,
Wakes Nature's charms to vie with thine!
She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
To mate thy melody of voice;
The dew that on the violet lies
Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes;
But, Edith, wake, and all we see
Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee!"—
"She comes not yet," grey Ferrand cried;
"Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
Those notes prolong'd, that soothing theme,
Which best may mix with Beauty's dream,
And whisper, with their silvery tone,
The hope she loves, yet fears to own."
He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
The strains of flattery and of pride;
More soft, more low, more tender fell
The lay of love he bade them tell.
- IV. "Wake, Maid of Lorn! the moments fly,
Which yet that maiden-name allow;
Wake, Maiden, wake! the hour is nigh,
When Love shall claim a plighted vow.
By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
By Hope, that soon shall fears remove,
We bid thee break the bonds of rest,
And wake thee at the call of Love!
- "Wake, Edith, wake! in yonder bay
Lies many a galley gaily mann'd,
We hear the merry pibrochs play,
We see the streamers' silken band.

What Chieftain's praise these pibrochs swell,
 What crest is on these banners wove,
 The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell—
 The riddle must be read by Love."

- v. Retired her maiden train among,
 Edith of Lorn received the song,
 But tamed the minstrel's pride had been
 That had her cold demeanour seen ;
 For not upon her cheek awoke
 The glow of pride when Flattery spoke,
 Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
 One sigh responsive to the string.
 As vainly had her maidens vied
 In skill to deck the princely bride.
 Her locks, in dark-brown length array'd,
 Cathleen of Ulne, 'twas thine to braid ;
 Young Eva with meet reverence drew
 On the light foot the silken shoe,
 While on the ankle's slender round
 Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound,
 That, bleach'd Lochryan's depths within,
 Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin.
 But Einion, of experience old,
 Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
 In many an artful plait she tied,
 To show the form it seem'd to hide,
 Till on the floor descending roll'd
 Its waves of crimson blent with gold.
- vi. O! lives there now so cold a maid,
 Who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,
 In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
 And conquest won—the bridal hour—
 With every charm that wins the heart,
 By Nature given, enhanced by Art,
 Could yet the fair reflection view,
 In the bright mirror pictured true,
 And not one dimple on her cheek
 A tell-tale consciousness bespeak?—
 Lives still such maid?—Fair damsels, say,
 For further vouches not my lay,
 Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
 When Lorn's bright Edith scorn'd to smile.
- vii. But Morag, to whose fostering care
 Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
 Morag, who saw a mother's aid
 By all a daughter's love repaid,

(Strict was that bond—most kind of all—
 Inviolat in Highland hall)—
 Grey Morag sate a space apart,
 In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
 In vain the attendants' fond appeal
 To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;
 She mark'd her child receive their care,
 Cold as the image sculptured fair,
 (Form of some sainted patroness,)
 Which cloister'd maids combine to dress;
 She mark'd—and knew her nursling's heart
 In the vain pomp took little part.
 Wistful a while she gazed—then press'd
 The maiden to her anxious breast
 In finish'd loveliness—and led
 To where a turret's airy head,
 Slender and steep, and battled round,
 O'erlook'd, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,
 Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
 Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.

- VIII. "Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
 Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
 From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
 To the green Ilay's fertile shore;
 Or mainland turn, where many a tower
 Owns thy bold brother's feudal power,
 Each on its own dark cape reclined,
 And listening to its own wild wind,
 From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
 O'erawes the woodland and the waste,
 To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
 Of Connal with his rocks engaging.
 Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
 A single brow but thine has frown'd,
 To sadden this auspicious morn,
 That bids the daughter of high Lorn
 Impledge her spousal faith to wed
 The heir of mighty Somerled!
 Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
 The fair, the valiant, and the young,
 LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty name
 A thousand bards have given to fame,
 The mate of monarchs, and allied
 On equal terms with England's pride.—
 From chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
 Who hears the tale, and triumphs not?
 The damsel dons her best attire,
 The shepherd lights his beltane fire,

Joy, joy! each warder's horn hath sung,
 Joy, joy! each matin bell hath rung;
 The holy priest says grateful mass,
 Loud shouts each hardy galla-glass,
 No mountain den holds outcast boor,
 Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
 But he hath flung his task aside,
 And claim'd this morn for holy-tide;
 Yet, empress of this joyful day,
 Edith is sad while all are gay."—

- ix. Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
 Resentment check'd the struggling sigh.
 Her hurrying hand indignant dried
 The burning tears of injured pride—
 "Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise
 To swell yon hireling harpers' lays;
 Make to yon maids thy boast of power,
 That they may waste a wondering hour,
 Telling of banners proudly borne,
 Of pealing bell and bugle-horn,
 Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
 Crownlets and gauds of rare device.
 But thou, experienced as thou art,
 Think'st thou with these to cheat the heart,
 That, bound in strong affection's chain,
 Looks for return and looks in vain?
 No! sum thine Edith's wretched lot
 In these brief words—He loves her not!
- x. "Debate it not—too long I strove
 To call his cold observance love,
 All blinded by the league that stiled
 Edith of Lorn—while yet a child,
 She tripp'd the heath by Morag's side,—
 The brave Lord Ronald's destined bride.
 Ere yet I saw him, while afar
 His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war,
 Train'd to believe our fates the same,
 My bosom throbb'd when Ronald's name
 Came gracing Fame's heroic tale,
 Like perfume on the summer gale.
 What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
 Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold;
 Who touch'd the harp to heroes' praise,
 But his achievements swell'd the lays?
 Even Morag—not a tale of fame
 Was hers but closed with Ronald's name.
 He came! and all that had been told

Of his high worth seem'd poor and cold,
Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me!

- XI. "Since then, what thought had Edith's heart,
And gave not plighted love its part!—
And what requital? cold delay—
Excuse that shunn'd the spousal day.—
It dawns, and Ronald is not here!—
Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear, that though he may not scorn
A daughter of the House of Lorn,
Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
Again they meet, to part no more?"

- XII. —"Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts remove,
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Look, where beneath the castle grey
His fleet unmoor from Aros bay!
See'st not each galley's topmast bend,
As on the yards the sails ascend?
Hiding the dark-blue land, they rise
Like the white clouds on April skies;
The shouting vassals man the oars,
Behind them sink Mull's mountain shores,
Onward their merry course they keep,
Through whistling breeze and foaming deep.
And mark the headmost, seaward cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her mast,
As if she veil'd its banner'd pride,
To greet afar her prince's bride!
Thy Ronald comes, and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,
He chides her sloth!"—Fair Edith sigh'd,
Blush'd, sadly smiled, and thus replied:—

- XIII. "Sweet thought, but vain!—No, Morag! mark,
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
To win its way against the gale.
Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
Have view'd by fits the course she tries;
Now, though the darkening scud comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind

They strive her shivering sail to bind,
 Still nearer to the shelves' dread verge
 At every tack her course they urge,
 As if they fear'd Artornish more
 Than adverse winds and breakers' roar."

- xiv. Sooth spoke the maid.—Amid the tide
 The skiff she mark'd lay tossing sore,
 And shifted oft her stooping side,
 In weary tack from shore to shore.
 Yet on her destined course no more
 She gain'd, of forward way,
 Than what a minstrel may compare
 To the poor meed which peasants share,
 Who toil the livelong day;
 And such the risk her pilot braves,
 That oft, before she wore,
 Her boltsprit kiss'd the broken waves,
 Where in white foam the ocean raves
 Upon the shelving shore.
 Yet, to their destined purpose true,
 Undaunted toil'd her hardy crew,
 Nor look'd where shelter lay,
 Nor for Artornish Castle drew,
 Nor steer'd for Aros bay.
- xv. Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
 Borne onward by the willing breeze,
 Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
 Streamer'd with silk, and trick'd with gold,
 Mann'd with the noble and the bold
 Of Island chivalry.
 Around their prows the ocean roars,
 And chafes beneath their thousand oars,
 Yet bears them on their way:
 So chafes the war-horse in his might,
 That fieldward bears some valiant knight,
 Champs, till both bit and boss are white,
 But, foaming, must obey.
 On each gay deck they might behold
 Lances of steel and crests of gold,
 And hauberks with their burnish'd fold,
 That shimmer'd fair and free;
 And each proud galley, as she pass'd,
 To the wild cadence of the blast
 Gave wilder minstrelsy.
 Full many a shrill triumphant note
 Saline and Scallastle bade float
 Their misty shores around;

And Morven's echoes answer'd well,
And Duart heard the distant swell
Come down the darksome Sound.

xvi. So bore they on with mirth and pride,
And if that labouring bark they spied,
 'Twas with such idle eye
As nobles cast on lowly boor,
When, toiling in his task obscure,
 They pass him careless by.
Let them sweep on with heedless eyes!
But, had they known what mighty prize
 In that frail vessel lay,
The famish'd wolf, that prowls the wold,
Had scatheless pass'd the unguarded fold,
Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
 Unchallenged were her way!
And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
With mirth, and pride, and minstrel tone!
But had'st thou known who sail'd so nigh,
Far other glance were in thine eye!
Far other flush were on thy brow,
That, shaded by the bonnet, now
Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer
Of bridegroom when the bride is near!

xvii. Yes, sweep they on!—We will not leave,
For them that triumph, those who grieve.
 With that armada gay
Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
And bards to cheer the wassail rout,
 With tale, romance, and lay;
And of wild mirth each clamorous art
Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
May stupefy and stun its smart,
 For one loud busy day.
Yes, sweep they on!—But with that skiff
 Abides the minstrel tale,
Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
Labour that strain'd each sinew stiff.
 And one sad Maiden's wail.

xviii. All day with fruitless strife they toil'd,
With eve the ebbing currents boil'd
 More fierce from strait and lake;
And midway through the channel met
Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
And high their mingled billows jet,
As spears, that, in the battle set,

Spring upward as they break.
 Then, too, the lights of eve were past,
 And louder sung the western blast
 On rocks of Inninmore;
 Rent was the sail, and strain'd the mast,
 And many a leak was gaping fast,
 And the pale steersman stood aghast,
 And gave the conflict o'er.

- xix. 'Twas then that One, whose lofty look
 Nor labour dull'd nor terror shook,
 Thus to the Leader spoke:—
 "Brother, how hopest thou to abide
 The fury of this wilder'd tide,
 Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
 Until the day has broke?
 Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
 With quivering planks, and groaning keel,
 At the last billow's shock?
 Yet how of better counsel tell,
 Though here thou see'st poor Isabel
 Half dead with want and fear;
 For look on sea, or look on land,
 Or yon dark sky—on every hand
 Despair and death are near.
 For her alone I grieve,—on me
 Danger sits light, by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt;
 Either to bide the tempest's lour,
 Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
 Or rush amid their naval power,
 With war-cry wake their wassail-hour,
 And die with hand on hilt."—

- xx. That elder Leader's calm reply
 In steady voice was given,
 "In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven.
 Edward, trim thou the shatter'd sail,
 The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven;
 So shall we 'scape the western bay,
 The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
 So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the Castle wall;
 For if a hope of safety rest,
 'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
 Who seeks for shelter, storm-distress'd,
 Within a chieftain's hall.

If not—it best beseems our worth,
Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
By noble hands to fall.”

XXI. The helm, to his strong arm consign'd,
Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
And on her alter'd way,
Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
Like greyhound starting from the slip
To seize his flying prey,
Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave ;
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave.
It seems as if old Ocean shakes
From his dark brow the lucid flakes
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor-light that streaks
Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII. Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darken'd deep ;—
Artornish, on her frowning steep
'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
And landward far, and far to sea,
Her festal radiance flung.
By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd,
Whose lustre mingled well
With the pale beam that now appear'd,
As the cold moon her head uprear'd
Above the eastern fell.

XXIII. Thus guided, on their course they bore,
Until they near'd the mainland shore,
When frequent on the hollow blast
Wild shouts of merriment were cast,
And wind and wave and sea-bird's cry
With wassail sounds in concert vie,
Like funeral shrieks with revelry,
Or like the battle-shout
By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
When Triumph, Rage, and Agony,
Madden the fight and rout.

Now nearer yet, through mist and storm
 Dimly arose the Castle's form,
 And deepen'd shadow made,
 Far lengthen'd on the main below,
 Where, dancing in reflected glow,
 A hundred torches play'd,
 Spangling the wave with lights as vain
 As pleasures in this vale of pain,
 That dazzle as they fade.

- xxiv. Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee,
 They staid their course in quiet sea.
 Hewn in the rock, a passage there
 Sought the dark fortress by a stair,
 So straight, so high, so steep,
 With peasant's staff one valiant hand
 Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,
 'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear and brand,
 And plunged them in the deep.
 His bugle then the helmsman wound;
 Loud answer'd every echo round,
 From turret, rock, and bay,
 The postern's hinges crash and groan,
 And soon the warder's cresset shone
 On those rude steps of slippery stone,
 To light the upward way.
 "Thrice welcome, holy Sire!" he said;
 "Full long the spousal train have staid,
 And, vex'd at thy delay,
 Fear'd lest, amidst these wildering seas,
 The darksome night and freshening breeze
 Had driven thy bark astray."—

- xxv. "Warder," the younger stranger said,
 "Thine erring guess some mirth had made
 In mirthful hour; but nights like these,
 When the rough winds wake western seas,
 Brook not of glee. We crave some aid
 And needful shelter for this maid
 Until the break of day;
 For, to ourselves, the deck's rude plank
 Is easy as the mossy bank
 That's breath'd upon by May.
 And for our storm-toss'd skiff we seek
 Short shelter in this leeward creek,
 Prompt when the dawn the east shall streak
 Again to bear away."—
 Answered the Warder,—“In what name
 Assert ye hospitable claim?”

Whence come, or whither bound ?
 Hath Erin seen your parting sails ?
 Or come ye on Norweyan gales ?
 And seek ye England's fertile vales,
 Or Scotland's mountain ground ?"—

xxvi. " Warriors—for other title none
 For some brief space we list to own,
 Bound by a vow—warriors are we ;
 In strife by land, and storm by sea,
 We have been know to fame ;
 And these brief words have import dear,
 When sounded in a noble ear,
 To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
 That gives us rightful claim.
 Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy ;
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorn'd by the noble and the bold,
 Shunn'd by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea !"—

xxvii. " Bold stranger, no—'gainst claim like thine,
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
 Though urged in tone that more express'd
 A monarch than a suppliant guest.
 Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
 On this glad eve is free to all.
 Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
 'Gainst our ally, great England's Lord,
 Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
 To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
 Or, outlaw'd, dwelt by greenwood tree
 With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie,¹
 Or aided even the murderous strife,
 When Comyn fell beneath the knife
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce,
 This night had been a term of truce.—
 Ho, vassals ! give these guests your care,
 And show the narrow postern stair."

xxviii. To land these two bold brethren leapt,
 (The weary crew their vessel kept,)
 And, lighted by the torches' flare,
 That seaward flung their smoky glare,
 The younger knight that maiden bare
 Half lifeless up the rock ;

¹ Sir William Wallace.

On his strong shoulder lean'd her head,
 And down her long dark tresses shed,
 As the wild vine in tendrils spread,
 Droops from the mountain oak.
 Him follow'd close that elder Lord,
 And in his hand a sheathed sword,
 Such as few arms could wield;
 But when he boun'd him to such task,
 Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
 And rend the surest shield.

xxix. The raised portcullis' arch they pass,
 The wicket with its bars of brass,
 The entrance long and low,
 Flank'd at each turn by loop-holes strait,
 Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
 (If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
 To gall an entering foe.
 But every jealous post of ward
 Was now defenceless and unbarr'd,
 And all the passage free
 To one low-brow'd and vaulted room,
 Where squire and yeoman, page and groom,
 Plied their loud revelry.

xxx. And "Rest ye here," the Warder bade,
 "Till to our Lord your suit is said,—
 And, comrades, gaze not on the maid,
 And on these men who ask our aid,
 As if ye ne'er had seen
 A damsel tired of midnight bark,
 Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
 And bearing martial mien."
 But not for Eachin's reproof
 Would page or vassal stand aloof,
 But crowded on to stare,
 As men of courtesy untaught,
 Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
 From one the foremost there,
 His chequer'd plaid, and in its shroud,
 To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
 Involved his sister fair.
 His brother, as the clansman bent
 His sullen brow in discontent,
 Made brief and stern excuse;—
 "Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
 That decks thy Lord in bridal hall,
 'Twere honour'd by her use."

xxx. Proud was his tone, but calm ; his eye
 Had that compelling dignity,
 His mien that bearing haught and high,
 Which common spirits fear!
 Needed nor word nor signal more,
 Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o'er ;
 Upon each other back they bore,
 And gazed like startled deer.
 But now appear'd the Seneschal,
 Commission'd by his lord to call
 The strangers to the Baron's hall,
 Where feasted fair and free
 That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
 With Edith there his lovely bride,
 And her bold brother by her side,
 And many a chief, the flower and pride
 Of Western land and sea.

Here pause we, gentles, for a space ;
 And, if our tale hath won your grace,
 Grant us brief patience, and again
 We will renew the minstrel strain.

CANTO SECOND

- i. Fill the bright goblet, spread the festive board !
 Summon the gay, the noble, and the fair !
 Through the loud hall in joyous concert pour'd,
 Let mirth and music sound the dirge of Care !
 But ask thou not if Happiness be there,
 If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throes,
 Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear ;
 Lift not the festal mask !—enough to know,
 No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe.
- ii. With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
 With all that olden time deem'd gay,
 The Island Chieftain feasted high ;
 But there was in his troubled eye
 A gloomy fire, and on his brow
 Now sudden flush'd, and faded now,
 Emotions such as draw their birth
 From deeper source than festal mirth.
 By fits he paused, and harper's strain
 And jester's tale went round in vain,
 Or fell but on his idle ear
 Like distant sounds which dreamers hear.

Then would he rouse him, and employ
 Each art to aid the clamorous joy,
 And call for pledge and lay,
 And, for brief space, of all the crowd,
 As he was loudest of the loud,
 Seem gayest of the gay.

- III. Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
 Mark'd in brief mirth, or musing long;
 The vacant brow, the unlistening ear,
 They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
 And his fierce starts of sudden glee
 Seem'd bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy.
 Nor thus alone misjudged the crowd,
 Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
 And jealous of his honour'd line,
 And that keen knight, De Argentine,
 (From England sent on errand high,
 The western league more firm to tie,)
 Both deem'd in Ronald's mood to find
 A lover's transport-troubled mind.
 But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
 Pierced deeper through the mystery,
 And watch'd, with agony and fear,
 Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer.
- IV. She watch'd—yet fear'd to meet his glance,
 And he shunn'd hers;—till when by chance
 They met, the point of foeman's lance
 Had given a milder pang!
 Beneath the intolerable smart
 He writhed—then sternly mann'd his heart
 To play his hard but destined part,
 And from the table sprang.
 “Fill me the mighty cup!” he said,
 “Erst own'd by royal Somerled:
 Fill it, till on the studded brim
 In burning gold the bubbles swim,
 And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine!
 To you, brave lord, and brother mine,
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
 The union of Our House with thine,
 By this fair bridal-link!”—
- v. “Let it pass round!” quoth He of Lorn,
 “And in good time—that winded horn
 Must of the Abbot tell;
 The laggard monk is come at last.”

Lord Ronald heard the bugle-blast,
 And on the floor at random cast,
 The untasted goblet fell.
 But when the warder in his ear
 Tells other news, his blither cheer
 Returns like sun of May,
 When through a thunder-cloud it beams!—
 Lord of two hundred isles, he seems
 As glad of brief delay,
 As some poor criminal might feel,
 When, from the gibbet or the wheel,
 Respited for a day.

vi. “ Brother of Lorn,” with hurried voice
 He said, “ And you, fair lords, rejoice!
 Here, to augment our glee,
 Come wandering knights from travel far,
 Well proved, they say, in strife of war,
 And tempest on the sea:—
 Ho! give them at your board such place
 As best their presences may grace,
 And bid them welcome free! ”
 With solemn step, and silver wand,
 The Seneschal the presence scann'd
 Of these strange guests; and well he knew
 How to assign their rank its due;
 For though the costly furs
 That erst had deck'd their caps were torn,
 And their gay robes were over-worn,
 And soil'd their gilded spurs,
 Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their face,
 As suited best the princely dais,¹
 And royal canopy;
 And there he marshalled them their place,
 First of that company.

vii. Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide,
 That gave to guests unnamed, unknown,
 A place so near their prince's throne;
 But Owen Erraught said,
 “ For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bower and hall
 Has been my honour'd trade.
 Worship and birth to me are known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,

¹ *Dais*—the great hall-table—elevated a step or two above the rest of the room.

Not by furr'd robe or broider'd zone;
 And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three strangers oft have sate
 In higher place than now."—

- VIII. "I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
 "Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell;—
 Mark'd ye the younger stranger's eye,
 My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
 How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the noble rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,
 Because the owner might not brook
 On any save his peers to look?
 And yet it moves me more,
 That steady, calm, majestic brow,
 With which the elder chief even now
 Scann'd the gay presence o'er,
 Like being of superior kind,
 In whose high-toned impartial mind
 Degrees of mortal rank and state
 Seem objects of indifferent weight.
 The lady too—though closely tied
 The mantle veil both face and eye,
 Her motions' grace it could not hide,
 Nor could her form's fair symmetry."

- IX. Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
 Lour'd on the haughty front of Lorn.
 From underneath his brows of pride,
 The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
 And whisper'd closely what the ear
 Of Argentine alone might hear;
 Then question'd, high and brief,
 If, in their voyage, aught they knew
 Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
 Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
 With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief?
 And if, their winter's exile o'er,
 They harbour'd still by Ulster's shore,
 Or launch'd their galleys on the main,
 To vex their native land again?
- X. That younger stranger, fierce and high,
 At once confronts the Chieftain's eye
 With look of equal scorn;—
 "Of rebels have we nought to show;
 But if of Royal Bruce thou'dst know,

I warn thee he has sworn,
 Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
 His banner Scottish winds shall blow,
 Despite each mean or mighty foe,
 From England's every bill and bow,
 To Allaster of Lorn."

Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
 But Ronald quench'd the rising fire;
 "Brother, it better suits the time
 To chase the night with Ferrand's rhyme,
 Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine, the jars
 That flow from these unhappy wars."—

"Content," said Lorn; and spoke apart
 With Ferrand, master of his art,

Then whisper'd Argentine,—
 "The lay I named will carry smart
 To these bold strangers' haughty heart,
 If right this guess of mine."

He ceased, and it was silence all,
 Until the minstrel waked the hall.

THE BROOCH OF LORN

- XI. "Whence the brooch of burning gold,
 That clasps the Chieftain's mantle-fold,
 Wrought and chased with rare device,
 Studded fair with gems of price,
 On the varied tartans beaming,
 As, through night's pale rainbow gleaming,
 Fainter now, now seen afar,
 Fitful shines the northern star?

"Gem! ne'er wrought on Highland mountain,
 Did the fairy of the fountain,
 Or the mermaid of the wave,
 Frame thee in some coral cave?
 Did, in Iceland's darksome mine,
 Dwarf's swart hands thy metal twine?
 Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou here,
 From England's love, or France's fear?"

SONG CONTINUED

- XII. "No!—thy splendours nothing tell
 Foreign art or faëry spell.
 Moulded thou for monarch's use,
 By the overweening Bruce,
 When the royal robe he tied
 O'er a heart of wrath and pride;
 Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
 By the victor hand of Lorn!

" When the gem was won and lost,
 Widely was the war-cry toss'd!
 Rung aloud Bendourish fell,
 Answer'd Douchart's sounding dell,
 Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
 When the homicide, o'ercome,
 Hardly 'scaped, with scathe and scorn,
 Left the pledge with conquering Lorn!

SONG CONCLUDED

- XIII. " Vain was then the Douglas brand,
 Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
 Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
 Making sure of murder's work;
 Barendown fled fast away,
 Fled the fiery De la Haye,
 When this brooch, triumphant borne,
 Beam'd upon the breast of Lorn.

" Farthest fled its former Lord
 Left his men to brand and cord,
 Bloody brand of Highland steel,
 English gibbet, axe, and wheel.
 Let him fly from coast to coast,
 Dogg'd by Comyn's vengeful ghost,
 While his spoils, in triumph worn,
 Long shall grace victorious Lorn!"

- XIV. As glares the tiger on his foes,
 Hemm'd in by hunters, spears, and bows,
 And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
 Selects the object of his spring,—
 Now on the bard, now on his Lord,
 So Edward glared and grasp'd his sword—
 But stern his brother spoke,—“ Be still.
 What! art thou yet so wild of will,
 After high deeds and sufferings long,
 To chafe thee for a menial's song?—
 Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strains,
 To praise the hand that pays thy pains!
 Yet something might thy song have told
 Of Lorn's three vassals, true and bold,
 Who rent their Lord from Bruce's hold,
 As underneath his knee he lay,
 And died to save him in the fray.
 I've heard the Bruce's cloak and clasp
 Was clench'd within their dying grasp,
 What time a hundred foemen more
 Rush'd in, and back the victor bore,

Long after Lorn had left the strife,
Full glad to 'scape with limb and life.—
Enough of this—And, Minstrel, hold,
As minstrel-hire, this chain of gold,
For future lays a fair excuse,
To speak more nobly of the Bruce.”—

- xv. “ Now, by Columba’s shrine, I swear,
And every saint that’s buried there,
’Tis he himself! ” Lorn sternly cries,
“ And for my kinsman’s death he dies.”
As loudly Ronald calls,—“ Forbear!
Not in my sight while brand I wear,
O’ermatch’d by odds, shall warrior fall,
Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
This ancient fortress of my race
Shall be misfortune’s resting-place,
Shelter and shield of the distress’d,
No slaughter-house for shipwreck’d guest.”—
“ Talk not to me,” fierce Lorn replied,
“ Of odds or match!—when Comyn died,
Three daggers clash’d within his side!
Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
On God’s own altar stream’d his blood,
While o’er my prostrate kinsman stood
The ruthless murderer—e’en as now—
With armed hand and scornful brow!—
Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
And lay the outlaw’d felons low! ”

- xvi. Then up sprang many a mainland Lord,
Obedient to their Chieftain’s word.
Barcaldine’s arm is high in air,
And Kinloch-Alline’s blade is bare,
Black Murthok’s dirk has left its sheath,
And clench’d is Dermid’s hand of death.
Their mutter’d threats of vengeance swell
Into a wild and warlike yell;
Onward they press with weapons high,
The affrighted females shriek and fly,
And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
Had darken’d ere its noon of day,—
But every chief of birth and fame,
That from the Isles of Ocean came,
At Ronald’s side that hour withstood
Fierce Lorn’s relentless thirst for blood.

- xvii. Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
Lord of the misty hills of Skye,

Mac-Neil, wild Bara's ancient thane,
 Duart, of bold Clan-Gillian's strain,
 Fergus, of Canna's castled bay,
 Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
 Soon as they saw the broadswords glance,
 With ready weapons rose at once,
 More prompt, that many an ancient feud,
 Full oft suppress'd, full oft renew'd,
 Glow'd 'twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
 And many a lord of ocean's isle.
 Wild was the scene—each sword was bare,
 Back stream'd each chieftain's shaggy hair,
 In gloomy opposition set,
 Eyes, hands, and brandish'd weapons met;
 Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
 Flash'd to the torches many a sword;
 And soon those bridal lights may shine
 On purple blood for rosy wine.

xviii. While thus for blows and death prepared,
 Each heart was up, each weapon bared,
 Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
 Still revered hospitable laws.
 All menaced violence, but alike
 Reluctant each the first to strike,
 (For aye accursed in minstrel line
 Is he who brawls 'mid song and wine,)
 And, match'd in numbers and in might,
 Doubtful and desperate seem'd the fight.
 Thus threat and murmur died away,
 Till on the crowded hall there lay
 Such silence, as the deadly still,
 Ere bursts the thunder on the hill.
 With blade advanced, each Chieftain bold
 Show'd like the Sworder's form of old,
 As wanting still the torch of life,
 To wake the marble into strife.

xix. That awful pause the stranger maid,
 And Edith, seized to pray for aid.
 As to De Argentine she clung,
 Away her veil the stranger flung,
 And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
 Fast stream'd her eyes, wide flow'd her hair.
 "O thou, of knighthood once the flower,
 Sure refuge in distressful hour,
 Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
 For our dear faith, and oft hast sought
 Renown in knightly exercise,

When this poor hand has dealt the prize,
 Say, can thy soul of honour brook
 On the unequal strife to look,
 When, butcher'd thus in peaceful hall,
 Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall! "
 To Argentine she turn'd her word,
 But her eye sought the Island Lord.
 A flush like evening's setting flame
 Glow'd on his cheek; his hardy frame,
 As with a brief convulsion, shook:
 With hurried voice and eager look,—
 "Fear not," he said, "my Isabel!
 What said I—Edith!—all is well—
 Nay, fear not—I will well provide
 The safety of my lovely bride—
 My bride?"—but there the accents clung
 In tremor to his faltering tongue.

xx. Now rose De Argentine, to claim
 The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
 To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
 'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
 (Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
 His care their safety to provide;
 For knight more true in thought and deed
 Than Argentine ne'er spurr'd a steed)—
 And Ronald, who his meaning guess'd,
 Seem'd half to sanction the request.
 This purpose fiery Torquil broke:—
 "Somewhat we've heard of England's yoke."
 He said, "and, in our islands, Fame
 Hath whisper'd of a lawful claim,
 That calls the Bruce fair Scotland's Lord,
 Though dispossess'd by foreign sword.
 This craves reflection—but though right
 And just the charge of England's Knight,
 Let England's crown her rebels seize
 Where she has power;—in towers like these,
 'Midst Scottish Chieftains summon'd here
 To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
 Be sure, with no consent of mine,
 Shall either Lorn or Argentine
 With chains or violence, in our sight,
 Oppress a brave and banish'd Knight."

xxi. Then waked the wild debate again,
 With brawling threat and clamour vain.
 Vassals and menials, thronging in,
 Lent their brute rage to swell the din;

Then, far and wide, a bugle-clang
 From the dark ocean upward rang.
 "The Abbot comes!" they cry at once,
 "The holy man, whose favour'd glance
 Hath sainted visions known;
 Angels have met him on the way,
 Beside the blessed martyrs' bay,
 And by Columba's stone.
 His monks have heard their hymnings high
 Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
 To cheer his penance lone,
 When at each cross, on girth and wold,
 (Their number thrice a hundred-fold,)
 His prayer he made, his beads he told,
 With Aves many a one—
 He comes our feuds to reconcile,
 A sainted man from sainted isle;
 We will his holy doom abide,
 The Abbot shall our strife decide."

xxii. Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
 When through the wide revolving door
 The black-stoled brethren wind;
 Twelve sandall'd monks, who relics bore,
 With many a torch-bearer before,
 And many a cross behind.
 Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
 And dagger bright and flashing brand
 Dropp'd swiftly at the sight;
 They vanish'd from the Churchman's eye,
 As shooting stars, that glance and die,
 Dart from the vault of night.

xxiii. The Abbot on the threshold stood,
 And in his hand the holy rood;
 Back on his shoulders flow'd his hood,
 The torch's glaring ray
 Show'd, in its red and flashing light,
 His wither'd cheek and amice white,
 His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
 His tresses scant and grey.
 "Fair Lords," he said, "Our Lady's love,
 And peace be with you from above,
 And Benedicite!—
 —But what means this? no peace is here!—
 Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal cheer?
 Or are these naked brands
 A seemly show for Churchman's sight,
 When he comes summon'd to unite
 Betrothed hearts and hands?"

- xxiv. Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
 Proud Lorn first answer'd the appeal;—
 "Thou comest, O holy Man,
 True sons of blessed church to greet,
 But little deeming here to meet
 A wretch, beneath the ban
 Of Pope and Church, for murder done
 Even on the sacred altar-stone!—
 Well mayst thou wonder we should know
 Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,
 Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,
 With excommunicated Bruce!
 Yet well I grant, to end debate,
 Thy sainted voice decide his fate."
- xxv. Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
 And knighthood's oath and honour's laws;
 And Isabel, on bended knee,
 Brought pray'rs and tears to back the plea:
 And Edith lent her generous aid,
 And wept, and Lorn for mercy pray'd.
 "Hence," he exclaimed, "degenerate maid!
 Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
 I brought thee, like a paramour,
 Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
 His careless cold approach to wait?—
 But the bold Lord of Cumberland,
 The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand;
 His it shall be—Nay, no reply!
 Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry."
 With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
 Yet nought relax'd his brow of awe.
- xxvi. Then Argentine, in England's name,
 So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
 He waked a spark, that, long suppress'd,
 Had smoulder'd in Lord Ronald's breast;
 And now, as from the flint the fire,
 Flash'd forth at once his generous ire.
 "Enough of noble blood," he said,
 "By English Edward had been shed,
 Since matchless Wallace first had been
 In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green,
 And done to death by felon hand,
 For guarding well his father's land.
 Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
 And valiant Seton—where are they?
 Where Somerville, the kind and free?
 And Fraser, flower of chivalry?"

Have they not been on gibbet bound,
 Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,
 And hold we here a cold debate,
 To yield more victims to their fate?
 What! can the English Leopard's mood
 Never be gorged with northern blood?
 Was not the life of Athole shed,
 To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed?
 And must his word, till dying day,
 Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay!—
 Thou frown'st, De Argentine,—My gage
 Is prompt to prove the strife I wage.”—

xxvii. “Nor deem,” said stout Dunvegan's knight,
 “That thou shalt brave alone the fight!
 By saints of isle and mainland both,
 By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,)¹
 Let Rome and England do their worst,
 Howe'er attainted or accursed,
 If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
 Once more to brave a battle-plain,
 If Douglas couch again his lance,
 Or Randolph dare another chance,
 Old Torquil will not be to lack
 With twice a thousand at his back.—
 Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
 Good Abbot! for thou know'st of old,
 Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
 Smack of the wild Norwegian still;
 Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
 For England's wealth, or Rome's applause.”

xxviii. The Abbot seem'd with eye severe
 The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear;
 Then on King Robert turn'd the Monk,
 But twice his courage came and sunk,
 Confronted with the hero's look;
 Twice fell his eye, his accents shook;
 At length, resolved in tone and brow,
 Sternly he question'd him—“And thou,
 Unhappy! what hast thou to plead,
 Why I denounce not on thy deed
 That awful doom which canons tell
 Shuts paradise, and opens hell;
 Anathema of power so dread,
 It blends the living with the dead,

¹ The MacLeods, and most other distinguished Hebridean families, were of Scandinavian extraction, and some were late or imperfect converts to Christianity. The family names of Torquil, Thormod, etc., are all Norwegian.

Bids each good angel soar away,
And every ill one claim his prey;
Expels thee from the church's care,
And deafens Heaven against thy prayer;
Arms every hand against thy life,
Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant,
With meanest alms relieves thy want;
Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead,
Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
Rends Honour's scutcheon from thy hearse,
Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
And spurns thy corpse from hallow'd ground,
Flung like vile carrion to the hound;
Such is the dire and desperate doom
For sacrilege, decreed by Rome;
And such the well-deserved meed
Of thine unhallow'd, ruthless deed."—

XXIX. "Abbot!" The Bruce replied, "thy charge
It boots not to dispute at large.
This much, howe'er, I bid thee know,
No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
For Comyn died his country's foe.
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
Fulfill'd my soon-repent'd deed,
Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
The dire anathema has rung.
I only blame mine own wild ire,
By Scotland's wrongs incensed to fire.
Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And hears a penitent's appeal
From papal curse and prelate's zeal.
My first and dearest task achieved,
Fair Scotland from her thrall relieved,
Shall many a priest in cope and stole
Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul,
While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance
In Palestine, with sword and lance.
But, while content the Church should know
My conscience owns the debt I owe,
Unto De Argentine and Lorn
The name of traitor I return,
Bid them defiance stern and high,
And give them in their throats the lie!
These brief words spoke, I speak no more,
Do what thou wilt; my shrift is o'er."

- xxx. Like man by prodigy amazed,
 Upon the King the Abbot gazed;
 Then o'er his pallid features glance,
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance.
 His breathing came more thick and fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering light,
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flush'd is his brow, through every vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguish'd accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spoke.
- xxx. "De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head,
 And give thee as an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy gore;—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, heaven-controll'd,¹
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repress'd.
 It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains!—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe:
 O'ermaster'd yet by high behest,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!"
 He spoke, and o'er the astonish'd throng
 Was silence, awful, deep, and long.
- xxx. Again that light has fired his eye,
 Again his form swells bold and high,
 The broken voice of age is gone,
 'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone:—
 "Thrice vanquish'd on the battle-plain,
 Thy followers slaughter'd, fled, or ta'en,
 A hunted wanderer on the wild,
 On foreign shores a man exiled,
 Disowned, deserted, and distress'd,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!
 Bless'd in the hall and in the field,
 Under the mantle as the shield.
 Avenger of thy country's shame,
 Restorer of her injured fame,
 Bless'd in thy sceptre and thy sword,
 De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful Lord,
 Bless'd in thy deeds and in thy fame,
 What lengthen'd honours wait thy name!

¹ See the Book of Numbers, chap. xxiii. and xxiv.

In distant ages, sire and son
 Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
 And teach his infants, in the use
 Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce.
 Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
 Thy course, the theme of many a song!
 The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
 Hath bless'd thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!—
 Enough—my short-lived strength decays,
 And sinks the momentary blaze.—
 Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
 Not here must nuptial vow be spoke;
 Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
 Our task discharged.—Unmoor, unmoor! ”—
 His priests received the exhausted Monk,
 As breathless in their arms he sunk.
 Punctual his order to obey,
 The train refused all longer stay,
 Embark'd, raised sail, and bore away.

CANTO THIRD

- I. HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er thy startled head
 Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has roll'd,
 How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
 Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
 The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
 The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
 The wall-flower waves not on the ruin'd hold,
 Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
 The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning
 hill.
- II. Artornish! such a silence sunk
 Upon thy halls, when that grey Monk
 His prophet-speech had spoke;
 And his obedient brethren's sail
 Was stretch'd to meet the southern gale
 Before a whisper woke.
 Then murmuring sounds of doubt and fear,
 Close pour'd in many an anxious ear,
 The solemn stillness broke;
 And still they gazed with eager guess,
 Where, in an oriel's deep recess,
 The Island Prince seem'd bent to press
 What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,
 And gesture fierce, scarce deign'd to hear.

- III. Starting at length, with frowning look,
 His hand he clench'd, his head he shook,
 And sternly flung apart;—
 "And deem'st thou me so mean of mood,
 As to forget the mortal feud,
 And clasp the hand with blood imbrued
 From my dear Kinsman's heart?
 Is this thy rede?—a due return
 For ancient league and friendship sworn!
 But well our mountain proverb shows
 The faith of Islesmen ebbs and flows.
 Be it even so—believe, ere long,
 He that now bears shall wreak the wrong.—
 Call Edith—call the Maid of Lorn!
 My sister, slaves!—for further scorn,
 Be sure nor she nor I will stay.—
 Away, De Argentine, away!—
 We nor ally nor brother know,
 In Bruce's friend, or England's foe."
- IV. But who the Chieftain's rage can tell,
 When, sought from lowest dungeon cell
 To highest tower the castle round,
 No Lady Edith was there found!
 He shouted, "Falsehood!—treachery!—
 Revenge and blood!—a lordly meed
 To him that will avenge the deed!
 A Baron's lands!"—His frantic mood
 Was scarcely by the news withstood,
 That Morag shared his sister's flight,
 And that, in hurry of the night,
 'Scaped noteless, and without remark,
 Two strangers sought the Abbot's bark.—
 "Man every galley!—fly—pursue!
 The priest his treachery shall rue!
 Ay, and the time shall quickly come,
 When we shall hear the thanks that Rome
 Will pay his feigned prophecy!"
 Such was fierce Lorn's indignant cry;
 And Cormac Doil in haste obey'd,
 Hoisted his sail, his anchor weigh'd,
 (For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
 A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.)
 But others, lingering, spoke apart,—
 "The Maid has given her maiden heart
 To Ronald of the Isles,
 And, fearful lest her brother's word
 Bestow her on that English Lord,
 She seeks Iona's piles;

And wisely deems it best to dwell
A votaress in the holy cell,
Until these feuds so fierce and fell
The Abbot reconciles."

- v. As, impotent of ire, the hall
Echo'd to Lorn's impatient call,
"My horse, my mantle, and my train!
Let none who honours Lorn remain!"—
Courteous, but stern, a bold request
To Bruce De Argentine express'd.
"Lord Earl," he said,—"*I cannot chuse
But yield such title to the Bruce,
Though name and earldom both are gone,
Since he braced rebel's armour on—
But, Earl or Serf—rude phrase was thine
Of late, and launch'd at Argentine;
Such as compels me to demand
Redress of honour at thy hand.
We need not to each other tell,
That both can wield their weapons well;
Then do me but the soldier grace,
This glove upon thy helm to place
Where we may meet in fight;
And I will say, as still I've said,
Though by ambition far misled,
Thou art a noble knight.*"—
- vi. "And I," the princely Bruce replied,
"Might term it stain on knighthood's pride
That the bright sword of Argentine
Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine;
But, for your brave request,
Be sure the honour'd pledge you gave
In every battle-field shall wave
Upon my helmet-crest;
Believe, that if my hasty tongue
Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
It shall be well redress'd.
Not dearer to my soul was glove,
Bestow'd in youth by lady's love,
Than this which thou hast given!
Thus, then, my noble foe I greet;
Health and high fortune till we meet,
And then—what pleases Heaven."
- vii. Thus parted they—for now, with sound
Like waves roll'd back from rocky ground,
The friends of Lorn retire;
Each mainland chieftain, with his train,

Draws to his mountain towers again,
Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain,
And mortal hopes expire.

But through the castle double guard,
By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
Wicket and gate were trebly barr'd,

By beam and bolt and chain;
Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
He pray'd excuse for mirth broke short,
And bade them in Artornish fort

In confidence remain.

Now torch and menial tendance led
Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
And beads were told, and Aves said,

And soon they sunk away
Into such sleep, as wont to shed
Oblivion on the weary head,
After a toilsome day.

- VIII. But soon uproused, the Monarch cried
To Edward slumbering by his side,
"Awake, or sleep for aye!
Even now there jarr'd a secret door—
A taper-light gleams on the floor—
Up, Edward, up, I say!
Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
Nay, strike not! 'tis our noble Host."
Advancing then his taper's flame,
Ronald stept forth, and with him came
Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
To Bruce in sign of fealty,
And proffer'd him his sword,
And hail'd him, in a monarch's style,
As king of mainland and of isle,
And Scotland's rightful lord.
"And O," said Roland, "Own'd of Heaven!
Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
Who rebel falchion drew,
Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
Even while I strove against thy claim,
Paid homage just and true?"—
"Alas! dear youth, the unhappy time,"
Answer'd the Bruce, "must bear the crime,
Since, guiltier far than you,
Even I"—he paused; for Falkirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.
The Chieftain to his breast he press'd,
And in a sigh conceal'd the rest.

- ix. They proffer'd aid, by arms and might,
To reposess him in his right;
But well their counsels must be weigh'd,
Ere banners raised and musters made,
For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
Bound many chiefs in southern leagues.
In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
To his new vassals frankly told.
"The winter worn in exile o'er,
I long'd for Carrick's kindred shore.
I thought upon my native Ayr,
And long'd to see the burly fare
That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
Now echoes through my father's hall.
But first my course to Arran led,
Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
And on the sea, by tempest toss'd,
Our barks dispersed, our purpose cross'd,
Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
Far from her destined course had run,
When that wise will, which masters ours,
Compell'd us to your friendly towers."
- x. Then Torquil spoke:—"The time craves speed!
We must not linger in our deed,
But instant pray our Sovereign Liege,
To shun the perils of a siege.
The vengeful Lorn, with all his powers,
Lies but too near Artornish towers,
And England's light-arm'd vessels ride,
Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
And sweep each strait, and guard each shore.
Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
Secret and safe my Liege must lie
In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide."—
"Not so, brave Chieftain," Ronald cried;
"Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
And raise in arms the men of Sleate,
Whilst thou, renown'd where chiefs debate,
Shalt sway their souls by council sage,
And awe them by thy locks of age."
—"And if my words in weight shall fail,
This ponderous sword shall turn the scale."
- xi. —"The scheme," said Bruce, "contents me well;
Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,
For safety, with my bark and crew,

Again to friendly Erin drew.
 There Edward, too, shall with her wend,
 In need to cheer her and defend,
 And muster up each scatter'd friend."—
 Here seem'd it as Lord Ronald's ear
 Would other counsel gladlier hear;
 But, all achieved as soon as plann'd,
 Both barks, in secret arm'd and mann'd,
 From out the haven bore;
 On different voyage forth they ply,
 This for the coast of winged Skye,
 And that for Erin's shore.

- XII. With Bruce and Roland bides the tale.
 To favouring winds they gave the sail,
 Till Mull's dark headlands scarce they knew,
 And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue.
 But then the squalls blew close and hard,
 And, fain to strike the galley's yard,
 And take them to the oar,
 With these rude seas, in weary plight,
 They strove the livelong day and night,
 Nor till the dawning had a sight
 Of Skye's romantic shore,
 Where Coolin stoops him to the West,
 They saw upon his shiver'd crest
 The sun's arising gleam;
 But such the labour and delay,
 Ere they were moored in Scavigh bay,
 (For calmer heaven compell'd to stay,)
 He shot a western beam.
 Then Ronald said, "If true mine eye,
 These are the savage wilds that lie
 North of Strathnardill and Dunsbye;
 No human foot comes here,
 And, since these adverse breezes blow,
 If my good Liege love hunter's bow,
 What hinders that on land we go,
 And strike a mountain-deer?
 Allan, my page, shall with us wend;
 A bow full deftly can he bend,
 And, if we meet a herd, may send
 A shaft shall mend our cheer."
 Then each took bow and bolts in hand,
 Their row-boat launch'd and leapt to land,
 And left their skiff and train,
 Where a wild stream, with headlong shock,
 Came brawling down its bed of rock,
 To mingle with the main.

- xiii. A while their route they silent made,
 As men who stalk for mountain-deer,
 Till the good Bruce to Roland said,
 "St. Mary! what a scene is here!
 I've traversed many a mountain-strand,
 Abroad and in my native land,
 And it has been my lot to tread
 Where safety more than pleasure led;
 Thus, many a waste I've wander'd o'er,
 Clombe many a crag, cross'd many a moor,
 But, by my halidome,
 A scene so rude, so wild as this,
 Yet so sublime in barrenness,
 Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press,
 Where'er I happ'd to roam."
- xiv. No marvel thus the Monarch spake;
 For rarely human eye had known
 A scene so stern as that dread lake,
 With its dark ledge of barren stone.
 Seems that primeval earthquake's sway
 Hath rent a strange and shatter'd way
 Through the rude bosom of the hill,
 And that each naked precipice,
 Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
 Tells of the outrage still.
 The wildest glen, but this, can show
 Some touch of Nature's genial glow;
 On high Benmore green mosses grow,
 And heath-bells bud in deep Glencoe,
 And copse on Cruchan-Ben;
 But here,—above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
 Nor aught of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken.
 For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
 That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain-side.
- xv. And wilder, forward as they wound,
 Were the proud cliffs and lake profound.
 Huge terraces of granite black
 Afforded rude and cumber'd track;
 For from the mountain hoar,
 Hurl'd headlong in some night of fear,

When yell'd the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o'er;
 And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
 In Nature's rage at random thrown,
 Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base.

The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle furl'd,
 Or on the sable waters curl'd,
 Or on the eddy breezes whirl'd,
 Dispersed in middle air.

And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
 And when return the sun's glad beams,
 Whiten'd with foam a thousand streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown.

- xvi. "This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or deer,
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
 And yonder peak of dread,
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts,
 Which seam its shiver'd head?"—
 "Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
 Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
 Full oft their careless humours please
 By sportive names from scenes like these.
 I would old Torquil were to show
 His maidens with their breasts of snow,
 Or that my noble Liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
 (The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
 The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
 Or that your eye could see the mood
 Of Corryvreckin's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whiten'd hood—

'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names."

xvii. Answer'd the Bruce, " And musing mind
Might here a graver moral find.
These mighty cliffs that heave on high
Their naked brows to middle sky,
Indifferent to the sun or snow,
Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,
May they not mark a Monarch's fate,—
Raised high 'mid storms of strife and state,
Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
O'er hope and love and fear aloft
High rears his crowned head—But soft!
Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag.
Who may they be? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread? "

xviii. " So said I—and believed in sooth,"
Ronald replied, " I spoke the truth.
Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
Five men—they mark us, and come on;
And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the land of Lorn,
Foes to my Liege."—" So let it be;
I've faced worse odds than five to three—
But the poor page can little aid;
Then be our battle thus array'd,
If our free passage they contest;
Cope thou with two, I'll match the rest."—
" Not so, my Liege—for, by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble strife;
My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
And less the loss should Roland fall.
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow,
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my Monarch's order given,
Two shafts should make our number even."—
" No! not to save my life!" he said;
" Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spill'd—we soon shall know,
Whether they come as friend or foe."

xix. Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh;—
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye.
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-look'd, unwilling to be seen;

They moved with half-resolved pace,
 And bent on earth each gloomy face.
 The foremost two were fair array'd,
 With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,
 And bore the arms of mountaineers,
 Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears.
 The three, that lagg'd small space behind,
 Seem'd serfs of more degraded kind;
 Goat-skins or deer-hides o'er them cast,
 Made a rude fence against the blast;
 Their arms and feet and heads were bare,
 Matted their beards, unshorn their hair;
 For arms, the caitiffs bore in hand,
 A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

- xx. Onward, still mute, they kept the track;—
 "Tell who ye be, or else stand back,"
 Said Bruce; "In deserts when they meet,
 Men pass not as in peaceful street."
 Still, at his stern command, they stood,
 And proffer'd greeting brief and rude,
 But acted courtesy so ill,
 As seem'd of fear, and not of will.
 "Wanderers we are, as you may be;
 Men hither driven by wind and sea,
 Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
 Will share with you this fallow deer."—
 "If from the sea, where lies your bark?"—
 "Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
 Wreck'd yesternight: but we are men,
 Who little sense of peril ken.
 The shades come down—the day is shut—
 Will you go with us to our hut?"—
 "Our vessel waits us in the bay;
 Thanks for your proffer—have good-day."—
 "Was that your galley, then, which rode
 Not far from shore when evening glow'd?"—
 "It was."—"Then spare your needless pain,
 There will she now be sought in vain.
 We saw her from the mountain head,
 When, with St. George's blazon red,
 A southern vessel bore in sight,
 And yours raised sail, and took to flight."—

- xxi. "Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!"
 Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce;
 "Nor rests there light enough to show
 If this their tale be true or no.
 The men seem bred of churlish kind,

Yet mellow nuts have hardest rind;
 We will go with them—food and fire
 And sheltering roof our wants require.
 Sure guard 'gainst treachery will we keep,
 And watch by turns our comrades' sleep.—
 Good fellow, thanks; your guests we'll be,
 And well will pay the courtesy.
 Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—
 —Nay, soft! we mix not companies.—
 Show us the path o'er crag and stone,
 And we will follow you;—lead on."

xxii. They reach'd the dreary cabin, made
 Of sails against a rock display'd,
 And there, on entering, found
 A slender boy, whose form and mien
 Ill suited with such savage scene,
 In cap and cloak of velvet green,
 Low seated on the ground.
 His garb was such as minstrels wear,
 Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
 His youthful cheek was marr'd by care,
 His eyes in sorrow drown'd.
 "Whence this poor boy?"—As Roland spoke,
 The voice his trance of anguish broke;
 As if awaked from ghastly dream,
 He raised his head with start and scream,
 And wildly gazed around;
 Then to the wall his face he turn'd,
 And his dark neck with blushes burn'd.

xxiii. "Whose is the boy?" again he said.
 "By chance of war our captive made;
 He may be yours, if you should hold
 That music has more charms than gold;
 For, though from earliest childhood mute,
 The lad can deftly touch the lute,
 And on the rote and viol play,
 And well can drive the time away
 For those who love such glee;
 For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
 It pipes upon the galley's shroud,
 Makes blither melody."—
 "Hath he, then, sense of spoken sound?"—
 "Aye; so his mother bade us know,
 A crone in our late shipwreck drown'd,
 And hence the silly stripling's woe.
 More of the youth I cannot say,
 Our captive but since yesterday;

When wind and weather wax'd so grim,
 We little listed think of him.—
 But why waste time in idle words?
 Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords.”
 Sudden the captive turn'd his head,
 And one quick glance to Ronald sped,
 It was a keen and warning look,
 And well the Chief the signal took.

- xxiv. “Kind host,” he said, “our needs require
 A separate board and separate fire;
 For know, that on a pilgrimage
 Wend I, my comrade, and this page.
 And, sworn to vigil and to fast,
 Long as this hallow'd task shall last,
 We never doff the plaid or sword,
 Or feast us at a stranger's board;
 And never share one common sleep,
 But one must still his vigil keep.
 Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
 We'll hold this hut's remoter end.”—
 “A churlish vow,” the eldest said,
 “And hard, methinks, to be obey'd.
 How say you, if, to wreak the scorn
 That pays our kindness harsh return,
 We should refuse to share our meal?”—
 “Then say we, that our swords are steel!
 And our vow binds us not to fast,
 Where gold or force may buy repast.”—
 Their host's dark brow grew keen and fell,
 His teeth are clench'd, his features swell;
 Yet sunk the felon's moody ire.
 Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
 Nor could his craven courage brook
 The Monarch's calm and dauntless look.
 With laugh constrain'd,—“Let every man
 Follow the fashion of his clan!
 Each to his separate quarters keep,
 And feed or fast, or wake or sleep.”

- xxv. Their fire at separate distance burns,
 By turns they eat, keep guard by turns;
 For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
 Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
 Still he avoided forward look,
 But slow and circumspectly took
 A circling, never-ceasing glance,
 By doubt and cunning mark'd at once,
 Which shot a mischief-boding ray,

From under eyebrows shagg'd and grey.
 The younger, too, who seem'd his son,
 Had that dark look the timid shun;
 The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
 And scowl'd a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
 Till all, as darkness onward crept,
 Couch'd down, and seem'd to sleep, or slept.
 Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue
 Must trust his eyes to wail his wrong,
 A longer watch of sorrow made,
 But stretch'd his limbs to slumber laid.

xxvi. Not in his dangerous host confides
 The King, but wary watch provides.
 Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
 Then wakes the King, young Allan last;
 Thus rank'd, to give the youthful page
 The rest required by tender age.
 What is Lord Ronald's wakeful thought,
 To chase the langour toil had brought?—
 (For deem not that he deign'd to throw
 Much care upon such coward foe,)—
 He thinks of lovely Isabel,
 When at her foeman's feet she fell,
 Nor less when, placed in princely selle,
 She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
 At Woodstock when he won the prize.
 Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair,
 In pride of place as 'mid despair,
 Must she alone engross his care.
 His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
 To Edith, turn—O how decide,
 When here his love and heart are given,
 And there his faith stands plight to Heaven!
 No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
 For seldom lovers long for sleep.
 Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
 Answer'd the dog-fox with his howl,
 Then waked the King—at his request,
 Lord Ronald stretch'd himself to rest.

xxvii. What spell was good King Robert's, say,
 To drive the weary night away?
 His was the patriot's burning thought,
 Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
 Of castle storm'd, of cities freed,
 Of deep design and daring deed,
 Of England's roses reft and torn,
 And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,

Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
 As heroes think, so thought the Bruce.
 No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
 Sleep shunn'd the Monarch's thoughtful eye
 Now over Coolin's eastern head
 The greyish light begins to spread,
 The otter to his cavern drew,
 And clamour'd shrill the wakening mew;
 Then watch'd the page—to needful rest
 The King resign'd his anxious breast.

- xxviii. To Allan's eyes was harder task,
 The weary watch their safeties ask.
 He trimm'd the fire, and gave to shine
 With bickering light the splinter'd pine;
 Then gazed awhile, where silent laid
 Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid.
 But little fear waked in his mind,
 For he was bred of martial kind,
 And, if to manhood he arrive,
 May match the boldest knight alive.
 Then thought he of his mother's tower,
 His little sisters' greenwood bower,
 How there the Easter-gambols pass,
 And of Dan Joseph's lengthen'd mass.
 But still before his weary eye
 In rays prolong'd the blazes die—
 Again he roused him—on the lake
 Look'd forth, where now the twilight-flake
 Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
 On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay furl'd,
 The morning breeze the lake had curl'd,
 The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
 With ceaseless plash kiss'd cliff or sand;—
 It was a slumbrous sound—he turn'd
 To tales at which his youth had burn'd,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon cross'd,
 Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless well,
 Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell.
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
 And on his sight the vaults arise;
 That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling spars
 Gleam like a firmament of stars!
 —Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak

Her anger in that thrilling shriek!—
No! all too late, with Allan's dream
Mingled the captive's warning scream,
As from the ground he strives to start,
A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
Upward he casts his dizzy eyes, . . .
Murmurs his master's name, . . . and dies!

xxix. Not so awoke the King! his hand
Snatch'd from the flame a knotted brand,
The nearest weapon of his wrath;
With this he cross'd the murderer's path,
And venged young Allan well!
The spatter'd brain and bubbling blood
Hiss'd on the half-extinguish'd wood,
The miscreant gasp'd and fell!
Nor rose in peace the Island Lord;
One caitiff died upon his sword,
And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
In mortal grapple overthrown.
But while Lord Ronald's dagger drank
The life-blood from his panting flank,
The Father-ruffian of the band
Behind him rears a coward hand!
—O for a moment's aid,
Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,¹
Dash to the earth another foe,
Above his comrade laid!—
And it is gain'd—the captive sprung
On the raised arm, and closely clung,
And, ere he shook him loose,
The master'd felon press'd the ground,
And gasp'd beneath a mortal wound,
While o'er him stands the Bruce.

xxx. "Miscreant! while lasts thy flitting spark,
Give me to know the purpose dark,
That arm'd thy hand with murderous knife,
Against offenceless stranger's life?"—
"No stranger thou!" with accent fell,
Murmur'd the wretch; "I know thee well;
And know thee for the foeman sworn
Of my high chief, the mighty Lorn."—
"Speak yet again, and speak the truth

¹ "On witnessing the disinterment of Bruce's remains at Dunfermline, in 1822," says Sir Walter, "many people shed tears; for there was the wasted skull, which once was the head that thought so wisely and boldly for his country's deliverance; and there was the dry bone, which had once been the sturdy arm that killed Sir Henry de Bohun, between the two armies, *at a single blow*, on the evening before the battle of Bannockburn."—*Tales of a Grandfather*.

For thy soul's sake!—from whence this youth?
 His country, birth, and name declare,
 And thus one evil deed repair.”—
 “Vex me no more! . . . my blood runs cold . . .
 No more I know than I have told.
 We found him in a bark we sought
 With different purpose . . . and I thought” . . .
 Fate cut him short; in blood and broil,
 As he had lived, died Cormac Doil.

- xxxI. Then resting on his bloody blade,
 The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
 “Now shame upon us both!—that boy
 Lifts his mute face to heaven,
 And clasps his hands, to testify
 His gratitude to God on high,
 For strange deliverance given.
 His speechless gesture thanks hath paid,
 Which our free tongues have left unsaid!”
 He raised the youth with kindly word,
 But mark'd him shudder at the sword:
 He cleansed it from its hue of death,
 And plunged the weapon in its sheath.
 “Alas, poor child! unfitting part
 Fate doom'd, when with so soft a heart,
 And form so slight as thine,
 She made thee first a pirate's slave,
 Then, in his stead, a patron gave
 Of wayward lot like mine;
 A landless prince, whose wandering life
 Is but one scene of blood and strife—
 Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be,
 But he'll find resting-place for thee.—
 Come, noble Ronald! o'er the dead
 Enough thy generous grief is paid,
 And well has Allan's fate been wroke;
 Come, wend we hence—the day has broke.
 Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
 Was false, that she had hoisted sail.”

- xxxII. Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
 The Island Lord bade sad farewell
 To Allan:—“Who shall tell this tale,
 He said, “in halls of Donagaile!
 Oh, who his widow'd mother tell,
 That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell!—
 Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my care
 For mass and knell and funeral prayer;
 While o'er those caitiffs, where they lie,
 The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry!”

And now the eastern mountain's head
 On the dark lake threw lustre red;
 Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
 Ravine and precipice and peak—
 (So earthly power at distance shows;
 Reveals his splendour, hides his woes.)
 O'er sheets of granite, dark and broad,
 Rent and unequal, lay the road.
 In sad discourse the warriors wind,
 And the mute captive moves behind.

CANTO FOURTH

I. Stranger! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
 The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
 Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
 By lake and cataract, her lonely throne;
 Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
 Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
 Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
 Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
 And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad.—The loneliness
 Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye;
 And strange and awful fears began to press
 Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
 Then hast thou wish'd some woodman's cottage nigh,
 Something that show'd of life, though low and mean;
 Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
 Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol would have been,
 Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
 An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
 Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,
 In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise:
 Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,
 Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
 But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
 Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
 That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

II. Through such wild scenes the champion pass'd,
 When bold halloo and bugle-blast
 Upon the breeze came loud and fast.
 "There," said the Bruce, "rung Edward's horn!
 What can have caused such brief return?
 And see, brave Ronald,—see him dart

O'er stock and stone like hunted hart,
 Precipitate, as is the use,
 In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
 —He marks us, and his eager cry
 Will tell his news ere he be nigh."

- III. Loud Edward shouts, "What make ye here,
 Warring upon the mountain-deer,
 When Scotland wants her King?
 A bark from Lennox cross'd our track,
 With her in speed I hurried back,
 These joyful news to bring—
 The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
 And Douglas wakes his native vale;
 Thy storm-toss'd fleet hath won its way
 With little loss to Brodick-Bay,
 And Lennox, with a gallant band,
 Waits but thy coming and command
 To waft them o'er to Carrick strand.
 There are blithe news!—but mark the close!
 Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
 As with his host he northward pass'd,
 Hath on the Borders breathed his last."

- IV. Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
 Was little wont his joy to speak,
 But then his colour rose:
 "Now, Scotland! shortly shalt thou see,
 With God's high will, thy children free,
 And vengeance on thy foes!
 Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
 Bear witness with me, Heaven, belongs
 My joy o'er Edward's bier;
 I took my knighthood at his hand,
 And lordship held of him, and land,
 And well may vouch it here,
 That, blot the story from his page,
 Of Scotland ruin'd in his rage,
 You read a monarch brave and sage,
 And to his people dear."—
 "Let London's burghers mourn her Lord,
 And Croydon monks his praise record,"
 The eager Edward said;
 "Eternal as his own, my hate
 Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
 And dies not with the dead!
 Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
 When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
 That pointed yet to Scotland's land,
 As his last accents pray'd

Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
 If he one Scottish head should spare,
 Till stretch'd upon the bloody lair
 Each rebel corpse was laid!
 Such hate was his, when his last breath
 Renounced the peaceful house of death,
 And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
 Be borne by his remorseless host,
 As if his dead and stony eye
 Could still enjoy her misery!
 Such hate was his—dark, deadly, long;
 Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong! ”—

- v. “ Let women, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords:
 Nor doubt of living foes, to sate
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.
 Now, to the sea! behold the beach,
 And see the galleys' pendants stretch
 Their fluttering length down favouring gale!
 Aboard, aboard! and hoist the sail.
 Hold we our way for Arran first,
 Where meet in arms our friends dispersed,
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle fray.
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard spread.—
 Does noble Ronald share our course,
 Or stay to raise his island force? ”—
 “ Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's side,”
 Replied the Chief, “ will Roland bide.
 And since two galleys yonder ride,
 Be mine, so please my liege, dismiss'd
 To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
 And all who hear the Minche's roar,
 On the Long Island's lonely shore.
 The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
 Ourselves may summon in our way;
 And soon on Arran's shore shall meet,
 With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet,
 If aught avails their Chieftain's hest
 Among the islesmen of the west.”
- vi. Thus was their venturous council said,
 But, ere their sails the galleys spread,
 Coriskin dark and Coolin high
 Echoed the dirge's doleful cry.
 Along that sable lake pass'd slow,—
 Fit scene for such a sight of woe,—
 The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore

The murder'd Allan to the shore.
 At every pause, with dismal shout,
 Their coronach of grief rung out,
 And ever, when they moved again,
 The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
 And, with the pibroch's shrilling wail,
 Mourn'd the young heir of Donagaile.
 Round and around, from cliff and cave,
 His answer stern old Coolin gave,
 Till high upon his misty side
 Languish'd the mournful notes, and died.
 For never sounds, by mortal made,
 Attain'd his high and haggard head,
 That echoes but the tempest's moan,
 Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

- VII. Merrily, merrily bounds the bark,
 She bounds before the gale,
 The mountain breeze from Ben-na-darch
 Is joyous in her sail!
 With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse,
 The cords and canvas strain,
 The waves, divided by her force,
 In rippling eddies chased her course,
 As if they laugh'd again.
 Not down the breeze more blithely flew,
 Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
 Than the gay galley bore
 Her course upon that favouring wind,
 And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
 And Slapin's cavern'd shore.
 'Twas then that warlike signals wake
 Dunscaith's dark towers and Eisord's lake,
 And soon, from Cavilgarrigh's head,
 Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread;
 A summons these of war and wrath
 To the brave clans of Sleat and Strath,
 And, ready at the sight,
 Each warrior to his weapons sprung,
 And targe upon his shoulder flung,
 Impatient for the fight.
 Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare grey,
 Had charge to muster their array,
 And guide their barks to Brodick-Bay.

- VIII. Signal of Ronald's high command,
 A beacon gleam'd o'er sea and land,
 From Canna's tower, that, steep and grey,
 Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.

Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
 To view the turret scathed by time;
 It is a task of doubt and fear
 To aught but goat or mountain-deer.
 But rest thee on the silver beach,
 And let the aged herdsman teach
 His tale of former day;
 His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
 And for thy seat by ocean's side,
 His varied plaid display;
 Then tell, how with their Chieftain came,
 In ancient times, a foreign dame
 To yonder turret grey.
 Stern was her Lord's suspicious mind,
 Who in so rude a jail confined
 So soft and fair a thrall!
 And oft, when moon on ocean slept,
 That lovely lady sate and wept
 Upon the castle-wall,
 And turn'd her eye to southern climes,
 And thought perchance of happier times,
 And touch'd her lute by fits, and sung
 Wild ditties in her native tongue.
 And still, when on the cliff and bay
 Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
 And every breeze is mute,
 Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
 Steals a strange pleasure mix'd with fear,
 While from that cliff he seems to hear
 The murmur of a lute,
 And sounds, as of a captive lone,
 That mourns her woes in tongue unknown.—
 Strange is the tale—but all too long
 Already hath it staid the song—
 Yet who may pass them by,
 That crag and tower in ruins grey,
 Nor to their hapless tenant pay
 The tribute of a sigh!

- ix. Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
 O'er the broad ocean driven,
 Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
 The steersman's hand hath given.
 And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
 Their hunters to the shore,
 And each his ashen bow unbent,
 And gave his pastime o'er,
 And at the Island Lord's command,
 For hunting spear took warrior's brand.

On Scooreigg next a warning light
 Summon'd her warriors to the fight;
 A numerous race, ere stern MacLeod
 O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode,
 When all in vain the ocean-cave
 Its refuge to his victims gave.
 The Chief, relentless in his wrath,
 With blazing heath blockades the path;
 In dense and stifling volumes roll'd,
 The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold!
 The warrior-threat, the infant's plain,
 The mother's screams, were heard in vain;
 The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
 Till in the vault a tribe expires!
 The bones which strew that cavern's gloom,
 Too well attest their dismal doom.

- x. Merrily, merrily goes the bark
 On a breeze from the northward free,
 So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
 Or the swan through the summer sea.
 The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
 And Ulva dark and Colonsay,
 And all the group of islets gay
 That guard famed Staffa round.
 Then all unknown its columns rose,
 Where dark and undisturb'd repose
 The cormorant had found,
 And the shy seal had quiet home,
 And weltered in that wondrous dome,
 Where, as to shame the temples deck'd
 By skill of earthly architect,
 Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
 A Minster to her Maker's praise!
 Not for a meaner use ascend
 Her columns, or her arches bend;
 Nor of a theme less solemn tells
 That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,
 And still, between each awful pause,
 From the high vault an answer draws,
 In varied tone prolong'd and high,
 That mocks the organ's melody.
 Nor doth its entrance front in vain
 To old Iona's holy fane,
 That Nature's voice might seem to say,
 "Well hast thou done, frail Child of clay!
 Thy humble powers that stately shrine
 Task'd high and hard—but witness mine!"

- xI. Merrily, merrily goes the bark,
 Before the gale she bounds;
 So darts the dolphin from the shark,
 Or the deer before the hounds.
 They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
 And they waken'd the men of the wild Tiree,
 And the Chief of the sandy Coll;
 They paused not at Columba's isle,
 Though peal'd the bells from the holy pile
 With long and measured toll;
 No time for matin or for mass,
 And the sounds of the holy summons pass
 Away in the billows' roll.
 Lochbuie's fierce and warlike Lord
 Their signal saw, and grasp'd his sword,
 And verdant Ilay call'd her host,
 And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
 Lord Ronald's call obey,
 And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
 Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
 And lonely Colonsay;
 —Scenes sung by him who sings no more!
 His bright and brief career is o'er,
 And mute his tuneful strains;
 Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
 That loved the light of song to pour;
 A distant and a deadly shore
 Has LEYDEN's cold remains!
- xII. Ever the breeze blows merrily,
 But the galley ploughs no more the sea.
 Lest, rounding wild Cantyre, they meet
 The southern foeman's watchful fleet,
 They held unwonted way;—
 Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
 Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er,
 As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
 Upon the eastern bay.
 It was a wondrous sight to see
 Topmast and pennon glitter free,
 High raised above the greenwood tree,
 As on dry land the galley moves,
 By cliff and copse and alder groves.
 Deep import from that selcouth sign,
 Did many a mountain Seer divine,
 For ancient legends told the Gael,
 That when a royal bark should sail
 O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
 Old Albyn should in fight prevail,

And every foe should faint and quail
Before her silver Cross.

- xiii. Now launch'd once more, the inland sea
They furrow with fair augury,
And steer for Arran's isle;
The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-Ghoil, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
And bade Loch Ranza smile.
Thither their destined course they drew;
It seem'd the isle her monarch knew,
So brilliant was the landward view,
The ocean so serene;
Each puny wave in diamonds roll'd
O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
With azure strove and green.
The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
Glow'd with the tints of evening's hour,
The beach was silver sheen,
The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
And, oft renew'd, seem'd oft to die,
With breathless pause between.
O who, with speech of war and woes,
Would wish to break the soft repose
Of such enchanting scene!

- xiv. Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks?
The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
The timid look and downcast eye,
And faltering voice the theme deny.
And good King Robert's brow express'd,
He ponder'd o'er some high request,
As doubtful to approve;
Yet in his eye and lip the while,
Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
Which manhood's graver mood beguile
When lovers talk of love.
Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled;
—"And for my bride betrothed," he said.
"My Liege has heard the rumour spread
Of Edith from Artornish fled.
Too hard her fate—I claim no right
To blame her for her hasty flight;
Be joy and happiness her lot!—
But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
And Lorn recall'd his promised plight,
In the assembled chieftains' sight.—
When, to fulfil our fathers' band,

I proffer'd all I could—my hand—
 I was repulsed with scorn;
 Mine honour I should ill assert,
 And worse the feelings of my heart,
 If I should play a suitor's part
 Again, to pleasure Lorn."—

xv. "Young Lord," the Royal Bruce replied,
 "That question must the Church decide;
 Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
 Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
 The very tie, which she hath broke,
 To thee should still be binding yoke.
 But, for my sister Isabel—
 The mood of woman who can tell?
 I guess the Champion of the Rock,
 Victorious in the tourney shock,
 That knight unknown, to whom the prize
 She dealt,—had favour in her eyes;
 But since our brother Nigel's fate,
 Our ruin'd house and hapless state,
 From worldly joy and hope estranged,
 Much is the hapless mourner changed.
 Perchance," here smiled the noble King,
 "This tale may other musings bring.
 Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
 The little convent of Saint Bride;
 There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
 Till fate shall give more prosperous day;
 And thither will I bear thy suit,
 Nor will thine advocate be mute."

xvi. As thus they talk'd in earnest mood,
 That speechless boy beside them stood.
 He stoop'd his head against the mast,
 And bitter sobs came thick and fast,
 A grief that should not be repress'd,
 But seem'd to burst his youthful breast.
 His hands, against his forehead held,
 As if by force his tears repell'd,
 But through his fingers, long and slight,
 Fast trill'd the drops of crystal bright.
 Edward, who walk'd the deck apart,
 First spied this conflict of the heart.
 Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
 He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind;
 By force the slender hand he drew
 From those poor eyes that stream'd with dew.
 As in his hold the stripling strove,—

(’Twas a rough grasp, though meant in love,)
 Away his tears the warrior swept,
 And bade shame on him that he wept.
 “I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
 Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong!
 For, were he of our crew the best,
 The insult went not unredress’d.
 Come, cheer thee; thou art now of age
 To be a warrior’s gallant page;
 Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey fair
 O’er hill and holt my boy shall bear,
 To hold my bow in hunting grove,
 Or speed on errand to my love;
 For well I wot thou wilt not tell
 The temple where my wishes dwell.”

xvii. Bruce interposed,—“Gay Edward, no,
 This is no youth to hold thy bow,
 To fill thy goblet, or to bear
 Thy message light to lighter fair.
 Thou art a patron all too wild
 And thoughtless, for this orphan child.
 See’st thou not how apart he steals,
 Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals?
 Fitter by far in yon calm cell
 To tend our sister Isabel,
 With father Augustin to share
 The peaceful change of convent prayer,
 Than wander wild adventures through,
 With such a reckless guide as you.”—
 “Thanks, brother!” Edward answer’d gay
 “For the high laud thy words convey!
 But we may learn some future day,
 If thou or I can this poor boy
 Protect the best, or best employ.
 Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand;
 Launch we the boat, and seek the land.”

xviii. To land King Robert lightly sprung,
 And thrice aloud his bugle rung
 With note prolong’d and varied strain,
 Till bold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
 Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
 Had in a glen a hart at bay,
 And Lennox cheer’d the laggard hounds,
 When waked that horn the greenwood bounds.
 “It is the foe!” cried Boyd, who came
 In breathless haste with eye of flame—
 “It is the foe!—Each valiant lord

Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword! "—
 "Not so," replied the good Lord James.
 "That blast no English bugle claims.
 Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
 Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight.
 Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
 If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear!
 Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring;
 That blast was winded by the King!"

- xix. Fast to their mates the tidings spread,
 And fast to shore the warriors sped.
 Bursting from glen and greenwood tree,
 High waked their loyal jubilee!
 Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
 And clasp'd his hands, and wept aloud.
 Veterans of early fields were there,
 Whose helmets press'd their hoary hair;
 Whose swords and axes bore a stain
 From life-blood of the red-hair'd Dane;
 And boys, whose hands scarce brook'd to wield
 The heavy sword or bossy shield.
 Men too were there, that bore the scars
 Impress'd in Albyn's woful wars,
 At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
 Teyndrum's dread rout, and Methven's flight
 The might of Douglas there was seen,
 There Lennox with his graceful mien;
 Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded Knight;
 The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light;
 The Heir of murder'd De la Haye,
 And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay.
 Around their King regain'd they press'd,
 Wept, shouted, clasp'd him to their breast,
 And young and old, and serf and lord,
 And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
 And he in many a peril tried,
 Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
 And live or die by Bruce's side!

- xx. Oh, War! thou hast thy fierce delight,
 Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!
 Such gleams, as from thy polish'd shield
 Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
 Such transports wake, severe and high,
 Amid the pealing conquest-cry;
 Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
 Muster the remnants of a host,
 And as each comrade's name they tell,

Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
 Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye,
 Vow to avenge them or to die!—
 Warriors!—and where are warriors found,
 If not on martial Britain's ground?
 And who, when waked with note of fire,
 Love more than they the British lyre?—
 Know ye not,—hearts to honour dear!
 That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, severe,
 At which the heartstrings vibrate high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye?
 And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
 Of tear is on his manly face,
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hail'd at Scone his early reign,
 This patriot band around him hung,
 And to his knees and bosom clung?—
 Blame ye the Bruce?—his brother blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while ashamed,
 With haughty laugh his head he turn'd,
 And dash'd away the tear he scorn'd.

- xxi. 'Tis morning, and the Convent bell,
 Long time had ceased its matin knell,
 Within thy walls, Saint Bride!
 An aged Sister sought the cell
 Assign'd to Lady Isabel,
 And hurriedly she cried,
 "Haste, gentle Lady, haste—there waits
 A noble stranger at the gates;
 Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has seen
 A Knight of such a princely mien;
 His errand, as he bade me tell,
 Is with the Lady Isabel."
 The princess rose,—for on her knee
 Low bent she told her rosary,—
 "Let him by thee his purpose teach:
 I may not give a stranger speech."
 "Saint Bride forefend, thou royal Maid!"
 The portress cross'd herself, and said,—
 "Not to be prioress might I
 Debate his will, his suit deny."
 "Has earthly show then, simple fool,
 Power o'er a sister of thy rule,
 And art thou, like the worldly train,
 Subdued by splendours light and vain?"—

- xxii. "No, Lady! in old eyes like mine,
 Gauds have no glitter, gems no shine;

Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
 One youthful page is all his train.
 It is the form, the eye, the word,
 The bearing of that stranger Lord;
 His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
 Built like a castle's battled wall,
 Yet moulded in such just degrees,
 His giant-strength seems lightsome ease.
 Close as the tendrils of the vine
 His locks upon his forehead twine,
 Jet-black, save where some touch of grey
 Has ta'en the youthful hue away.
 Weather and war their rougher trace
 Have left on that majestic face;—
 But 'tis his dignity of eye!
 There, if a suppliant, would I fly,
 Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
 Of sympathy, redress, relief—
 That glance, if guilty, would I dread
 More than the doom that spoke me dead! ”—
 “ Enough, enough,” the princess cried,
 “ 'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her pride!
 To meaner front was ne'er assign'd
 Such mastery o'er the common mind—
 Bestow'd thy high designs to aid,
 How long, O Heaven! how long delay'd!—
 Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
 My darling brother, royal Bruce! ”

xxiii. They met like friends who part in pain,
 And meet in doubtful hope again.
 But when subdued that fitful swell,
 The Bruce survey'd the humble cell;—
 “ And this is thine, poor Isabel!—
 That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
 For room of state, and bed of pall;
 For costly robes and jewels rare,
 A string of beads and zone of hair;
 And for the trumpet's sprightly call
 To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
 The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
 'Twixt hours of penitence and prayer!—
 O ill for thee, my royal claim
 From the First David's sainted name!
 O woe for thee, that while he sought
 His right, thy brother feebly fought! ”—

xxiv. “ Now lay these vain regrets aside,
 And be the unshaken Bruce! ” she cried.

" For more I glory to have shared
 The woes thy venturous spirit dared,
 When raising first thy valiant band
 In rescue of thy native land,
 Than had fair Fortune set me down
 The partner of an empire's crown.
 And grieve not that on Pleasure's stream
 No more I drive in giddy dream,
 For Heaven the erring pilot knew,
 And from the gulf the vessel drew,
 Tried me with judgments stern and great,
 My house's ruin, thy defeat,
 Poor Nigel's death, till, tamed, I own,
 My hopes are fix'd on Heaven alone;
 Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
 My heart to this vain world of sin."—

xxv. " Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice,
 First wilt thou wait thy brother's voice;
 Then ponder if in convent scene
 No softer thoughts might intervene—
 Say they were of that unknown Knight,
 Victor in Woodstock's tourney-fight—
 Nay, if his name such blush you owe,
 Victorious o'er a fairer foe! "
 Truly his penetrating eye
 Hath caught that blush's passing dye,—
 Like the last beam of evening thrown
 On a white cloud,—just seen and gone.
 Soon with calm cheek and steady eye,
 The princess made composed reply:—
 " I guess my brother's meaning well;
 For not so silent is the cell,
 But we have heard the isleman all
 Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
 And mine eye proves that Knight unknown
 And the brave Island Lord are one.—
 Had then his suit been earlier made,
 In his own name, with thee to aid,
 (But that his plighted faith forbade,)
 I know not . . . But thy page so near?—
 This is no tale for menial's ear."

xxvi. Still stood that page, as far apart
 As the small cell would space afford;
 With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
 He leant his weight on Bruce's sword,
 The monarch's mantle too he bore,
 And drew the fold his visage o'er.

" Fear not for him—in murderous strife,"
Said Bruce, " his warning saved my life;
Full seldom parts he from my side,
And in his silence I confide,
Since he can tell no tale again.
He is a boy of gentle strain,
And I have purposed he shall dwell
In Augustin the chaplain's cell,
And wait on thee, my Isabel.—
Mind not his tears; I've seen them flow,
As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
Unfit against the tide to pull,
And those that with the Bruce would sail,
Must learn to strive with stream and gale.—
But forward, gentle Isabel—
My answer for Lord Ronald tell."—

- xxvii. " This answer be to Ronald given—
The heart he asks is fix'd on heaven.
My love was like a summer flower,
That wither'd in the wintry hour,
Born but of vanity and pride,
And with these sunny visions died.
If further press his suit—then say,
He should his plighted troth obey,
Troth plighted both with ring and word,
And sworn on crucifix and sword.—
Oh, shame thee, Robert! I have seen
Thou hast a woman's guardian been!
Even in extremity's dread hour,
When press'd on thee the Southern power,
And safety, to all human sight,
Was only found in rapid flight,
Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
In agony of travail-pain,
And thou didst bid thy little band
Upon the instant turn and stand,
And dare the worst the foe might do,
Rather than, like a knight untrue,
Leave to pursuers merciless
A woman in her last distress.
And wilt thou now deny thine aid
To an oppress'd and injured maid,
Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
And press his fickle faith on me?—
So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
Had I those earthly feelings now,
Which could my former bosom move

Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
 Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract both,
 And fair acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
 The ill-requited Maid of Lorn!"

- xxviii. With sudden impulse forward sprung
 The page, and on her neck he hung;
 Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stoop'd, and bent his knee,
 Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell.—
 The princess, loosen'd from his hold,
 Blush'd angry at his bearing bold;
 But good King Robert cried,
 "Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind,
 He heard the plan my care design'd,
 Nor could his transports hide.—
 But, sister, now bethink thee well;
 No easy choice the convent cell;
 Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
 Either to force thy hand or heart,
 Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn,
 Or wrong for thee, the Maid of Lorn.
 But think,—not long the time has been,
 That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
 And wouldst the ditties best approve,
 That told some lay of hapless love.
 Now are thy wishes in thy power,
 And thou art bent on cloister bower!
 O! if our Edward knew the change,
 How would his busy satire range,
 With many a sarcasm varied still
 On woman's wish, and woman's will!"—

- xxix. "Brother, I well believe," she said,
 "Even so would Edward's part be play'd
 Kindly in heart, in word severe,
 A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
 He holds his humour uncontroll'd;
 But thou art of another mould.
 Say then to Ronald, as I say,
 Unless before my feet he lay
 The ring which bound the faith he swore,
 By Edith freely yielded o'er,
 He moves his suit to me no more.
 Nor do I promise, even if now

He stood absolved of spousal vow,
 That I would change my purpose made
 To shelter me in holy shade.—
 Brother, for little space, farewell!
 To other duties warns the bell.”—

- xxx. “Lost to the world,” King Robert said,
 When he had left the royal maid,
 “Lost to the world by lot severe,
 O what a gem lies buried here,
 Nipp’d by misfortune’s cruel frost,
 The buds of fair affection lost!—
 But what have I with love to do?
 Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
 —Pent in this isle we may not lie,
 Nor would it long our wants supply.
 Right opposite, the mainland towers
 Of my own Turnberry court our powers—
 Might not my father’s beadsman hoar,
 Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
 Kindle a signal-flame, to show
 The time propitious for the blow?
 It shall be so—some friend shall bear
 Our mandate with despatch and care;
 —Edward shall find the messenger.
 That fortress ours, the island fleet
 May on the coast of Carrick meet.—
 O Scotland! shall it e’er be mine
 To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
 To raise my victor-head, and see
 Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free;—
 That glance of bliss is all I crave,
 Betwixt my labours and my grave!”
 Then down the hill he slowly went,
 Oft pausing on the steep descent,
 And reach’d the spot where his bold train
 Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO FIFTH

- i. On fair Loch-Ranza stream’d the early day,
 Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke are upward curl’d
 From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
 And circling mountains sever from the world.
 And there the fisherman his sail unfurl’d,
 The goat-herd drove his kids to steep Ben-Ghoil,
 Before the hut the dame her spindle twirl’d,

Courting the sunbeam as she plied her toil,—
For, wake where'er he may, Man wakes to care and
toil.

But other duties call'd each convent maid,
Roused by the summons of the moss-grown bell;
Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to tell.
And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer;
The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
As stoop'd her gentle head in meek devotion there.

- II. She raised her eyes, that duty done,
When glanced upon the pavement-stone,
Gemm'd and enchased, a golden ring,
Bound to a scroll with silken string,
With few brief words inscribed to tell,
"This for the Lady Isabel."
Within, the writing farther bore,—
"'Twas with this ring his plight he swore,
With this his promise I restore;
To her who can the heart command,
Well may I yield the plighted hand.
And O! for better fortune born,
Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
Her who was Edith once of Lorn!"
One single flash of glad surprise
Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
But vanish'd in the blush of shame,
That, as its penance, instant came.
"O thought unworthy of my race!
Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
A moment's throb of joy to own,
That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown!—
Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
Think not thy lustre here shall gain
Another heart to hope in vain!
For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,
Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
And worldly splendours sink debased."
Then by the cross the ring she placed.

- III. Next rose the thought,—its owner far,
How came it here through bolt and bar?—
But the dim lattice is ajar.—
She looks abroad, the morning dew

A light short step had brush'd anew,
 And there were footprints seen
 On the carved buttress rising still,
 Till on the mossy window-sill
 Their track effaced the green.
 The ivy twigs were torn and fray'd,
 As if some climber's steps to aid.—
 But who the hardy messenger,
 Whose venturous path these signs infer?—
 "Strange doubts are mine!—Mona, draw nigh;
 —Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—
 What strangers, gentle mother, say,
 Have sought these holy walls to-day?"—
 "None, Lady, none of note or name;
 Only your brother's foot-page came.
 At peep of dawn—I pray'd him pass
 To chapel where they said the mass;
 But like an arrow he shot by,
 And tears seem'd bursting from his eye."

- iv. The truth at once on Isabel,
 As darted by a sunbeam, fell.—
 "'Tis Edith's self!—her speechless woe,
 Her form, her looks, the secret show!
 —Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
 And to my royal brother say,
 I do conjure him seek my cell,
 With that mute page he loves so well."—
 "What! know'st thou not his warlike host
 At break of day has left the coast?
 My old eyes saw them from the tower.
 At eve they couch'd in greenwood bower,
 At dawn a bugle signal, made
 By their bold Lord, their ranks array'd;
 Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,
 No time for benedicite!
 Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,
 Just shake the dewdrops from their hair,
 And toss their armed crests aloft,
 Such matins theirs!"—"Good mother, soft—
 Where does my brother bend his way?"—
 "As I have heard, for Brodick-Bay,
 Across the isle—of barks a score
 Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them o'er,
 On sudden news, to Carrick-shore."—
 "If such their purpose, deep the need,"
 Said anxious Isabel, "of speed!
 Call Father Augustine, good dame."—
 The nun obey'd, the Father came.

- v. "Kind Father, hie without delay,
Across the hills to Brodick Bay.
This message to the Bruce be given;
I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
That, till he speak with me, he stay!
Or, if his haste brook no delay,
That he deliver, on my suit,
Into thy charge that stripling mute.
Thus prays his sister Isabel,
For causes more than she may tell—
Away, good father; and take heed,
That life and death are on thy speed."
His cowl the good old priest did on,
Took his piked staff and sandall'd shoon,
And, like a palmer bent by eld,
O'er moss and moor his journey held.
- vi Heavy and dull the foot of age,
And rugged was the pilgrimage;
But none was there beside, whose care
Might such important message bear.
Through birchen copse he wander'd slow,
Stunted and sapless, thin and low;
By many a mountain stream he pass'd,
From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
Dashing to foam their waters dun,
And sparkling in the summer sun.
Round his grey head the wild curlew
In many a fearless circle flew.
O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride;
He cross'd his brow beside the stone
Where Druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled,
He breathed a timid prayer for those
Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
There told his hours within the shade,
And at the stream his thirst allay'd.
Thence onward journeying slowly still,
As evening closed he reach'd the hill,
Where, rising through the woodland green,
Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen,
From Hastings, late their English lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.
The sun that sunk behind the isle,
Now tinged them with a parting smile.

VII. But though the beams of light decay,
'Twas bustle all in Brodick Bay.
The Bruce's followers crowd the shore,
And boats and barges some unmoor,
Some raise the sail, some seize the oar;
Their eyes oft turn'd where glimmer'd far
What might have seem'd an early star
On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
Was all too flickering, fierce, and bright.
Far distant in the south, the ray
Shone pale amid retiring day,
But as, on Carrick shore,
Dim seen in outlines faintly blue,
The shades of evening closer drew,
It kindled more and more.
The monk's slow steps now press the sands,
And now amid a scene he stands,
Full strange to churchman's eye;
Warriors, who, arming for the fight,
Rivet and clasp their harness light,
And twinkling spears, and axes bright,
And helmets flashing high.
Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears,
A language much unmeet he hears,
While, hastening all on board,
As stormy as the swelling surge
That mix'd its roar, the leaders urge
Their followers to the ocean verge,
With many a haughty word.

VIII. Through that wild throng the Father pass'd
And reach'd the Royal Bruce at last.
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float,
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave,
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,
And loosen'd in its sheath his brand.
Edward and Lennox were at hand,
Douglas and Ronald had the care
The soldiers to the barks to share.—
The Monk approach'd and homage paid;
"And art thou come," King Robert said,
"So far to bless us ere we part?"—
—"My Liege, and with a loyal heart!—
But other charge I have to tell,"—
And spoke the hest of Isabel.
—"Now by Saint Giles," the monarch cried,

" This moves me much!—this morning tide,
 I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
 With my commandment there to bide."—
 —" Thither he came the portress show'd,
 But there, my Liege, made brief abode."—

- ix. "'Twas I," said Edward, " found employ
 Of nobler import for the boy.
 Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
 A fitting messenger to find,
 To bear thy written mandate o'er
 To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
 I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
 The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
 I found the stripling on a tomb
 Low-seated, weeping for the doom
 That gave his youth to convent gloom.
 I told my purpose, and his eyes
 Flash'd joyful at the glad surprise.
 He bounded to the skiff, the sail
 Was spread before a prosperous gale,
 And well my charge he hath obey'd;
 For, see! the ruddy signal made,
 That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
 Guards carelessly our father's hall."—

- x. " O wild of thought, and hard of heart! "
 Answer'd the Monarch, " on a part
 Of such deep danger to employ
 A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
 Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
 Without a tongue to plead for life!
 Now, were my right restored by Heaven,
 Edward, my crown I would have given,
 Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
 I peril'd thus the helpless child."—
 —Offended half, and half submit,
 " Brother and Liege, of blame like this,"
 Edward replied, " I little dream'd.
 A stranger messenger, I deem'd,
 Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
 Where all thy squires are known so well.
 Noteless his presence. sharp his sense,
 His imperfection his defence.
 If seen, none can his errand guess;
 If ta'en, his words no tale express—
 Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shine
 Might expiate greater fault than mine."—
 " Rash," said King Robert, " was the deed—

But it is done.—Embark with speed!—
Good Father, say to Isabel
How this unhappy chance befell;
If well we thrive on yonder shore,
Soon shall my care her page restore.
Our greeting to our sister bear,
And think of us in mass and prayer.”—

- XI. “Aye!” said the Priest, “while this poor hand
Can chalice raise or cross command,
While my old voice has accents’ use,
Can Augustine forget the Bruce!”
Then to his side Lord Ronald press’d,
And whisper’d, “Bear thou this request,
That when by Bruce’s side I fight,
For Scotland’s crown and freedom’s right,
The princess grace her knight to bear
Some token of her favouring care;
It shall be shown where England’s best
May shrink to see it on my crest.
And for the boy—since weightier care
For royal Bruce the times prepare,
The helpless youth is Ronald’s charge,
His couch my plaid, his fence my targe.”
He ceased; for many an eager hand
Had urg’d the barges from the strand.
Their number was a score and ten,
They bore thrice threescore chosen men.
With such small force did Bruce at last
The die for death or empire cast!
- XII. Now on the darkening main afloat,
Ready and mann’d rocks every boat;
Beneath their oars the ocean’s might
Was dash’d to sparks of glimmering light.
Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
Their armour glanced against the shore,
And, mingled with the dashing tide,
Their murmuring voices distant died.—
“God speed them!” said the Priest, as dark
On distant billows glides each bark;
“O Heaven! when swords for freedom shine,
And monarch’s right, the cause is thine!
Edge doubly every patriot blow!
Beat down the banners of the foe!
And be it to the nations known,
That Victory is from God alone!”
As up the hill his path he drew,
He turn’d his blessings to renew,

Oft turn'd, till on the darken'd coast
 All traces of their course were lost;
 Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
 To shelter for the evening hour.

- xiii. In night the fairy prospects sink,
 Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
 Close the fair entrance of the Clyde;
 The woods of Bute, no more descried,
 Are gone—and on the placid sea
 The rowers ply their task with glee,
 While hands that knightly lances bore
 Impatient aid the labouring oar.
 The half-faced moon shone dim and pale,
 And glanced against the whiten'd sail;
 But on that ruddy beacon-light
 Each steersman kept the helm aright,
 And oft, for such the King's command,
 That all at once might reach the strand,
 From boat to boat loud shout and hail
 Warn'd them to crowd or slacken sail.
 South and by west the armada bore,
 And near at length the Carrick shore.
 As less and less the distance grows,
 High and more high the beacon rose;
 The light, that seem'd a twinkling star,
 Now blazed portentous, fierce, and far.
 Dark-red the heaven above it glow'd,
 Dark-red the sea beneath it flow'd,
 Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
 In blood-red light her islets swim;
 Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl gave,
 Dropp'd from their crags on plashing wave.
 The deer to distant covert drew,
 The black-cock deem'd it day, and crew.
 Like some tall castle given to flame,
 O'er half the land the lustre came.
 "Now, good my Liege, and brother sage,
 What think ye of mine elfin page?"—
 "Row on!" the noble King replied,
 "We'll learn the truth whate'er betide;
 Yet sure the beadsman and the child
 Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild."

- xiv. With that the boats approach'd the land,
 But Edward's grounded on the sand;
 The eager Knight leap'd in the sea
 Waist-deep, and first on shore was he,
 Though every barge's hardy band

Contended which should gain the land,
 When that strange light, which, seen afar,
 Seem'd steady as the polar star,
 Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
 Seem'd travelling the realms of air.
 Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,
 As that portentous meteor rose;
 Helm, axe, and falchion glitter'd bright,
 And in the red and dusky light
 His comrade's face each warrior saw,
 Nor marvell'd it was pale with awe.
 Then high in air the beams were lost,
 And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
 Ronald to Heaven a prayer address'd,
 And Douglas cross'd his dauntless breast;
 "Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried,
 But reckless Edward spoke aside,
 "Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
 Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
 Or would thy dauntless heart endure
 Once more to make assurance sure!"—
 "Hush!" said the Bruce, "we soon shall know,
 If this be sorcerer's empty show,
 Or stratagem of southern foe.
 The moon shines out—upon the sand
 Let every leader rank his band."

- xv. Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
 That ruddy light's unnatural dye;
 The dubious cold reflection lay
 On the wet sands and quiet bay.
 Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
 His scatter'd files to order due,
 Till shield compact and serried spear
 In the cool light shone blue and clear.
 Then down a path that sought the tide,
 That speechless page was seen to glide;
 He knelt him lowly on the sand,
 And gave a scroll to Robert's hand.
 "A torch," the Monarch cried, "What, ho!
 Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know."
 But evil news the letters bare,
 The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
 Augmented, too, that very morn,
 By mountaineers who came with Lorn.
 Long harrow'd by oppressor's hand,
 Courage and faith had fled the land,
 And over Carrick, dark and deep,
 Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—

Cuthbert had seen that beacon-flame,
Unwitting from what source it came.
Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore.

- xvi. As round the torch the leaders crowd,
Bruce read these chilling news aloud.
"What council, nobles, have we now?—
To ambush us in greenwood bough,
And take the chance which fate may send
To bring our enterprise to end,
Or shall we turn us to the main
As exiles, and embark again?"—
Answer'd fierce Edward, "Hap what may,
In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must stay.
I would not minstrels told the tale,
Wildfire or meteor made us quail."—
Answer'd the Douglas, "If my Liege
May win yon walls by storm or siege,
Then were each brave and patriot heart
Kindled of new for loyal part."—
Answer'd Lord Ronald, "Not for shame
Would I that aged Torquil came,
And found, for all our empty boast,
Without a blow we fled the coast.
I will not credit that this land,
So famed for warlike heart and hand,
The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a truce."—
"Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll bide!"
So Boyd and Haye and Lennox cried;
So said, so vow'd, the leaders all;
So Bruce resolved: "And in my hall
Since the Bold Southern make their home,
The hour of payment soon shall come,
When with a rough and rugged host
Clifford may reckon to this cost.
Meantime, through well-known bosk and dell,
I'll lead where we may shelter well."
- xvii. Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight?—
It ne'er was known—yet grey-hair'd eld
A superstitious credence held,
That never did a mortal hand
Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand;
Nay, and that on the self-same night

When Bruce cross'd o'er, still gleams the light.
Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
And glittering wave and crimson'd shore—
But whether beam celestial, lent
By Heaven to aid the King's descent,
Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
To lure him to defeat and death,
Or were it but some meteor strange,
Of such as oft through midnight range,
Startling the traveller late and lone,
I know not—and it ne'er was known.

xviii. Now up the rocky pass they drew,
And Ronald, to his promise true,
Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
To aid him on the rugged way.
“Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
Why throbs that silly heart of thine?”—
—That name the pirates to their slave
(In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling) gave—
“Dost thou not rest thee on my arm?
Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm?
Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
This targe for thee and me supplied?
Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
And, trembler, canst thou terror feel?
Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart;
From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part.”
—O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word, at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken!
Half soothed, half grieved, half terrified,
Close drew the page to Ronald's side;
A wild delirious thrill of joy
Was in that hour of agony,
As up the steepy pass he strove,
Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

xix. The barrier of that iron shore,
The rock's steep ledge, is now climb'd o'er;
And from the castle's distant wall,
From tower to tower the warders call:
The sound swings over land and sea,
And marks a watchful enemy.—
They gain'd the Chase, a wide domain
Left for the Castle's silvan reign,
(Seek not the scene—the axe, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marr'd it now,)

But then, soft swept in velvet green
 The plain with many a glade between,
 Whose tangled alleys far invade
 The depth of the brown forest shade.
 Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
 Fair shelter for the sportive fawn;
 There, tufted close with copsewood green,
 Was many a swelling hillock seen;
 And all around was verdure meet
 For pressure of the fairies' feet.
 The glossy holly loved the park,
 The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
 And many an old oak, worn and bare,
 With all its shiver'd boughs, was there.
 Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
 On lawn and hillock, glade and dell.
 The gallant Monarch sigh'd to see
 These glades so loved in childhood free.
 Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
 He ranged beneath the forest bough.

xx. Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they sped.
 Well knew the band that measured tread,
 When, in retreat or in advance,
 The serried warriors move at once;
 And evil were the luck, if dawn
 Descried them on the open lawn.
 Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
 Strain up the bank and o'er the moss.
 From the exhausted page's brow
 Cold drops of toil are streaming now;
 With effort faint and lengthen'd pause,
 His weary step the stripling draws.
 "Nay, droop not yet!" the warrior said;
 "Come, let me give thee ease and aid!
 Strong are mine arms, and little care
 A weight so slight as thine to bear.—
 What! wilt thou not?—capricious boy!
 Then thine own limbs and strength employ.
 Pass but this night, and pass thy care,
 I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel!"
 Worn out, dishearten'd, and dismay'd,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid;
 His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
 He sunk among the midnight dews!

xxi. What may be done?—the night is gone—
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—

Eternal shame, if at the brunt
Lord Ronald grace not battle's front!—
“ See yonder oak, within whose trunk
Decay a darken'd cell hath sunk;
Enter, and rest thee there a space,
Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face.
I will not be, believe me, far;
But must not quit the ranks of war.
Well will I mark the bosky bourne,
And soon, to guard thee hence, return.—
Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy!
But sleep in peace, and wake in joy.”
In silvan lodging close bestow'd,
He placed the page, and onward strode
With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
And soon the marching band o'ertook.

XXII. Thus strangely left, long sobb'd and wept
The page, till, wearied out, he slept—
A rough voice waked his dream—“ Nay, here,
Here by this thicket, pass'd the deer—
Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
What have we here?—a Scottish plaid,
And in its folds a stripling laid?—
Come forth! thy name and business tell!—
What, silent?—then I guess thee well,
The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,
Wafted from Arran yester morn—
Come, comrades, we will straight return.
Our Lord may choose the rack should teach
To this young lurcher use of speech.
Thy bow-string, till I bind him fast.”—
“ Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast;
Unbound we'll lead him, fear it not;
'Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot.”
The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII. Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning sport;
And now with Lorn held deep discourse,
Now gave command for hound and horse.
War-steeds and palfreys paw'd the ground,
And many a deer-dog howl'd around.
To Amadine, Lorn's well-known word
Replying to that Southern Lord,
Mix'd with this clanging din, might seem
The phantasm of a fever'd dream.
The tone upon his ringing ears

Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
 When in rude waves or roaring winds
 Some words of woe the muser finds,
 Until more loudly and more near,
 Their speech arrests the page's ear.

- xxiv. "And was she thus," said Clifford, "lost?
 The priest should rue it to his cost!
 What says the monk!"—"The holy Sire
 Owns, that in masquer's quaint attire
 She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
 To all except to him alone.

But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
 Laid them aboard that very morn,
 And pirates seized her for their prey.
 He proffer'd ransom-gold to pay,
 And they agreed—but ere told o'er,
 The winds blow loud, the billows roar;
 They sever'd, and they met no more.
 He deems—such tempest vex'd the coast—
 Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost.
 So let it be, with the disgrace
 And scandal of her lofty race!
 Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
 Than brought her infamy on Lorn!"

- xxv. Lord Clifford now the captive spied;—
 "Whom, Herbert, hast thou there;" he cried.
 "A spy we seized within the Chase,
 A hollow oak his lurking place."—
 "What tidings can the youth afford?"—
 "He plays the mute."—"Then noose a cord—
 Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
 For his plaid's sake."—"Clan-Colla's loom,"
 Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
 Rather the vesture than the face,
 "Clan-Colla's dames such tartans twine;
 Wearer nor plaid claims care of mine.
 Give him, if my advice you crave,
 His own scathed oak; and let him wave
 In air, unless, by terror wrung,
 A frank confession find his tongue.—
 Nor shall he die without his rite;
 —Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
 And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy breath,
 As they convey him to his death."—
 "O brother! cruel to the last!"
 Through the poor captive's bosom pass'd
 The thought, but, to his purpose true
 He said not, though he sigh'd, "Adieu!"

xxvi. And will he keep his purpose still,
In sight of that last closing ill,
When one poor breath, one single word,
May freedom, safety, life, afford?
Can he resist the instinctive call,
For life that bids us barter all?—
Love, strong as death, his heart hath steel'd,
His nerves hath strung—he will not yield!
Since that poor breath, that little word,
May yield Lord Ronald to the sword.—
Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
The griesly headsman's by his side;
Along the greenwood Chase they bend,
And now their march has ghastly end!
That old and shatter'd oak beneath,
They destine for the place of death.
—What thoughts are his, while all in vain
His eye for aid explores the plain?
What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear,
He hears the death-prayer mutter'd near?
And must he die such death accurst,
Or will that bosom-secret burst?
Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
His trembling lips are livid blue;
The agony of parting life
Has nought to match that moment's strife!

xxvii. But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy!
Soon as the dire lament was play'd,
It waked the lurking ambuscade.
The Island Lord look'd forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,
“By Heaven, they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony!
They shall abye it!”—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, “They shall not harm
A ringlet of the stripling's hair;
But, till I give the word, forbear.
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their hold:
A spear above the copse display'd,
Be signal of the ambush made.
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate
And, when thou hear'st the battle-din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,

Secure the drawbridge—storm the port,
And man and guard the castle court.—
The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest-tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see.”

xxviii. Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compell'd to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood bough,
Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue.—
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
Sees the dark death-train moving by,
And, heedful, measures oft the space
The Douglas and his band must trace,
Ere they can reach their destined ground.
Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
Now cluster round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and mutter'd prayer
The victim for his fate prepare.—
What glances o'er the greenwood shade?
The spear that marks the ambushade.
“Now, noble Chief! I leave thee loose;
Upon them, Ronald!” said the Bruce.

xxix. “The Bruce, the Bruce!” to well-known cry
His native rocks and woods reply.
“The Bruce, the Bruce!” in that dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was heard.
The astonish'd Southern gazed at first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst
That waked in that presaging name.
Before, behind, around it came!
Half-arm'd, surprised, on every side
Hemm'd in, hew'd down, they bled and died.
Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
And fierce Clan-Colla's broadsword raged!
Full soon the few who fought were sped,
Nor better was their lot who fled,
And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
The Douglas's redoubted spear!
Two hundred yeomen on that morn
The castle left, and none return.

xxx. Not on their flight press'd Ronald's brand,
A gentler duty claim'd his hand.
He raised the page, where on the plain
His fear had sunk him with the slain:

And twice, that morn, surprise well near
 Betray'd the secret kept by fear;
 Once, when, with life returning, came
 To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name,
 And hardly recollection drown'd
 The accents in a murmuring sound;
 And once, when scarce he could resist
 The Chieftain's care to loose the vest,
 Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breast.
 But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
 For martial work was yet to do.

- xxxI. A harder task fierce Edward waits.
 Ere signal given, the castle gates
 His fury had assail'd;
 Such was his wonted reckless mood,
 Yet desperate valour oft made good,
 Even by its daring, venture rude,
 Where prudence might have fail'd.
 Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
 And struck the iron chain in two,
 By which its planks arose;
 The warder next his axe's edge
 Struck down upon the threshold ledge,
 'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge!
 The gate they may not close.
 Well fought the Southern in the fray,
 Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
 But stubborn Edward forced his way
 Against a hundred foes.
 Loud came the cry, "The Bruce, the Bruce!"
 No hope or in defence or truce,
 Fresh combatants pour in;
 Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
 They drive the struggling foe before,
 And ward on ward they win.
 Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
 And limbs were lopp'd and life-blood pour'd,
 The cry of death and conflict roar'd,
 And fearful was the din!
 The startling horses plunged and flung,
 Clamour'd the dogs till turrets rung,
 Nor sunk the fearful cry,
 Till not a foeman was there found
 Alive, save those who on the ground
 Groan'd in their agony!

- xxxII. The valiant Clifford is no more¹
 On Ronald's broadsword stream'd his gore.

¹ In point of fact, Clifford fell at Bannockburn.

But better hap had he of Lorn,
 Who, by the foemen backward borne,
 Yet gain'd with slender train the port,
 Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
 And cut the cable loose.
 Short were his shrift in that debate,
 That hour of fury and of fate,
 If Lorn encounter'd Bruce!
 Then long and loud the victor shout
 From turret and from tower rung out,
 The rugged vaults replied;
 And from the donjon tower on high,
 The men of Carrick may descry
 Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
 Of silver, waving wide!

xxxiii. The Bruce hath won his father's hall!
 —“ Welcome, brave friends and comrades all,
 Welcome to mirth and joy!
 The first, the last, is welcome here,
 From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,
 To this poor speechless boy.
 Great God! once more my sire's abode
 Is mine—behold the floor I trode
 In tottering infancy!
 And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
 Echoed my joyous shout and bound
 In boyhood, and that rung around
 To youth's unthinking glee!
 O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
 Then to my friends, my thanks be given! ”—
 He paused a space, his brow he cross'd—
 Then on the board his sword he toss'd,
 Yet steaming hot; with Southern gore
 From hilt to point 'twas crimson'd o'er.

xxxiv. “ Bring here,” he said, “ the mazers four,
 My noble fathers loved of yore.
 Thrice let them circle round the board,
 The pledge, fair Scotland's rights restored!
 And he whose lip shall touch the wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at nought,
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot!
 Sit, gentle friends! our hour of glee
 Is brief, we'll spend it joyously!
 Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,

When betwixt storm and storm he gleams.
Well is our country's work begun,
But more, far more, must yet be done.
Speed messengers the country through;
Arouse old friends, and gather new;
Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
The fairest forms, the truest hearts!
Call all, call all! from Reeds-wair-Path,
To the wild confines of Cape-Wrath;
Wide let the news through Scotland ring,
The Northern Eagle claps his wing! "

CANTO SIXTH

- i. O who, that shared them, ever shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
When breathless in the mart the couriers met,
Early and late, at evening and at prime;
When the loud cannon and the merry chime
Hail'd news on news, as field on field was won,
When Hope, long doubtful, soar'd at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun!

O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears!
The heart-sick faintness of the hope delay'd,
The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears
That track'd with terror twenty rolling years,
All was forgot in that blithe jubilee!
Her downcast eye even pale Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee,
That hail'd the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty!

Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
When 'gainst the invaders turn'd the battle's scale,
When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale;
When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale,
And fiery Edward routed stout St. John,
When Randolph's war-cry swell'd the southern gale,
And many a fortress, town, and tower was won,
And Fame still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done.

- ii. Blithe tidings flew from baron's tower,
To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,

And waked the solitary cell.
 Where lone Saint Bride's recluses dwell.
 Princess no more, fair Isabel,
 A vot'ress of the order now,
 Say, did the rule that bid thee wear
 Dim veil and woollen scapulaire,
 And reft thy locks of dark-brown hair,
 That stern and rigid vow,
 Did it condemn the transport high,
 Which glisten'd in thy watery eye,
 When minstrel or when palmer told
 Each fresh exploit of Bruce the bold?—
 And whose the lovely form, that shares
 Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers?
 No sister she of convent shade;
 So say these locks in lengthen'd braid,
 So say the blushes and the sighs,
 The tremors that unbidden rise,
 When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
 The brave Lord Ronald's praises came.

III. Believe, his father's castle won,
 And his bold enterprise begun,
 That Bruce's earliest cares restore
 The speechless page to Arran's shore:
 Nor think that long the quaint disguise
 Conceal'd her from a sister's eyes;
 And sister-like in love they dwell
 In that lone convent's silent cell.
 There Bruce's slow assent allows
 Fair Isabel the veil and vows;
 And there, her sex's dress regain'd,
 The lovely Maid of Lorn remain'd,
 Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
 Resounded with the din of war;
 And many a month, and many a day,
 In calm seclusion wore away.

IV. These days, these months, to years had worn,
 When tidings of high weight were borne
 To that lone island's shore;
 Of all the Scottish conquests made
 By the First Edward's ruthless blade,
 His son retain'd no more,
 Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
 Beleaguer'd by King Robert's powers;
 And they took term of truce,
 If England's King should not relieve
 The siege ere John the Baptist's eve,
 To yield them to the Bruce.

England was roused—on every side
 Courier and post and herald hied,
 To summon prince and peer,
 At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege,
 Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
 With buckler, brand, and spear.
 The term was nigh—they muster'd fast,
 By beacon and by bugle-blast
 Forth marshall'd for the field;
 There rode each knight of noble name,
 There England's hardy archers came,
 The land they trode seem'd all on flame,
 With banner, blade, and shield!
 And not famed England's powers alone,
 Renown'd in arms, the summons own;
 For Neustria's knights obey'd,
 Gascogne hath lent her horsemen good,
 And Cambria, but of late subdued,
 Sent forth her mountain-multitude,
 And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood
 Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
 Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.

- v. Right to devoted Caledon
 The storm of war rolls slowly on,
 With menace deep and dread;
 So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
 Suspend awhile the threaten'd shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head.
 Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
 King Robert mark'd the tempest nigh!
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
 His royal summons warn'd the land,
 That all who own'd their King's command
 Should instant take the spear and brand,
 To combat at his side.
 O who may tell the sons of fame,
 That at King Robert's bidding came,
 To battle for the right!
 From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
 From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-Moss,
 All boun'd them for the fight.
 Such news the royal courier tells,
 Who came to rouse dark Arran's dells;
 But farther tidings must the ear
 Of Isabel in secret hear,
 These in her cloister walk, next morn,
 Thus shared she with the Maid of Lorn.

vi. "My Edith, can I tell how dear
 Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel?—
 Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
 When I must say the words, We part!
 The cheerless convent-cell
 Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee;
 Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes fell.
 Nor, Edith, judge thyself betray'd
 Though Robert knows that Lorn's high Maid
 And his poor silent page were one.
 Versed in the fickle heart of man,
 Earnest and anxious hath he look'd
 How Ronald's heart the message brook'd
 That gave him, with her last farewell,
 The charge of Sister Isabel,
 To think upon thy better right,
 And keep the faith his promise plight.
 Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
 At first if vain repinings wake—
 Long since that mood is gone:
 Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
 And oft his breach of faith he blames—
 Forgive him for thine own!"—

vii. "No! never to Lord Ronald's bower
 Will I again as paramour"—
 "Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
 Until my final tale be said!—
 The good King Robert would engage
 Edith once more his elfin page,
 By her own heart, and her own eye,
 Her lover's penitence to try—
 Safe in his royal charge and free,
 Should such thy final purpose be,
 Again unknown to seek the cell,
 And live and die with Isabel."
 Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's eye
 Might have some glance of policy;
 Dunstaffnage had the monarch ta'en,
 And Lorn had own'd King Robert's reign;
 Her brother had to England fled,
 And there in banishment was dead;
 Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
 O'er tower and land was Edith's right;
 This ample right o'er tower and land
 Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand.

- VIII. Embarrass'd eye and blushing cheek
Pleasure and shame, and fear bespeak!
Yet much the reasoning Edith made:
" Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
In council to another's ear.
Why should she leave the peaceful cell?—
How should she part with Isabel?—
How wear that strange attire again?—
How risk herself 'midst martial men?—
And how be guarded on the way?—
At least she might entreat delay,"
Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
Reluctant to be thought to move
At the first call of truant love.
- IX. Oh, blame her not!—when zephyrs wake,
The aspen's trembling leaves must shake;
When beams the sun through April's shower,
It needs must bloom, the violet flower;
And Love, howe'er the maiden strive,
Must with reviving hope revive!
A thousand soft excuses came,
To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame.
Pledged by their sires in earliest youth,
He had her plighted faith and truth—
Then, 'twas her Liege's strict command,
And she, beneath his royal hand,
A ward in person and in land:—
And, last, she was resolved to stay
Only brief space—one little day—
Close hidden in her safe disguise
From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
But once to see him more!—nor blame
Her wish—to hear him name her name!—
Then, to bear back to solitude
The thought he had his falsehood rued!
But Isabel, who long had seen
Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
And well herself the cause might know,
Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
Joy'd, generous, that revolving time
Gave means to expiate the crime.
High glow'd her bosom as she said,
" Well shall her sufferings be repaid! "
Now came the parting hour—a band
From Arran's mountains left the land;
Their chief, Fitz-Louis, had the care

The speechless Amadine to bear
To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
To page the monarch dearly loved.

- x. The King had deem'd the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay:
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn-corn.
In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;
And three, advanced, form'd vaward-line,
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.
Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.
Beyond, the Southern host appears,
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam;
And where the heaven join'd with the hill,
Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost.
- xi. Down from the hill the maiden pass'd,
At the wild show of war aghast;
And traversed first the rearward host,
Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
Lennox and Lanark, too, were there,
And all the western land;
With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains rank'd their files.
In many a plaided band.
There, in the centre, proudly raised,
The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.
A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate array'd,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn;

But O! unseen for three long years,
 Dear was the garb of mountaineers
 To the fair Maid of Lorn!
 For one she look'd—but he was far
 Busied amid the ranks of war—
 Yet with affection's troubled eye
 She mark'd his banner boldly fly,
 Gave on the countless foe a glance,
 And thought on battle's desperate chance.

xii. To centre of the vaward-line
 Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
 Arm'd all on foot, that host appears
 A serried mass of glimmering spears.
 There stood the Marchers' warlike band,
 The warriors there of Lodon's land;
 Ettrick and Liddell bent the yew,
 A band of archers fierce, though few;
 The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
 And the bold Spears of Teviotdale;—
 The dauntless Douglas these obey,
 And the young Stuart's gentle sway.
 North-eastward by Saint Ninian's shrine,
 Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine
 The warriors, whom the hardy North
 From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.
 The rest of Scotland's war-array
 With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
 Where Bannock, with his broken bank
 And deep ravine, protects their flank.
 Behind them, screen'd by sheltering wood,
 The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal, stood:
 His men-at-arms bear mace and lance,
 And plumes that wave, and helms that glance.
 Thus fair divided by the King,
 Centre, and right, and left-ward wing,
 Composed his front; nor distant far
 Was strong reserve to aid the war.
 And 'twas to front of this array,
 Her guide and Edith made their way.

xiii. Here must they pause; for, in advance
 As far as one might pitch a lance,
 The Monarch rode along the van,
 The foe's approaching force to scan,
 His line to marshal and to range,
 And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
 Alone he rode—from head to heel
 Sheathed in his ready arms of steel;

Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
 But, till more near the shock of fight,
 Reining a palfrey low and light.
 A diadem of gold was set
 Above his bright steel basinet,
 And clasp'd within its glittering twine
 Was seen the glove of Argentine;
 Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
 Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
 He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
 Accoutred thus, in open sight
 Of either host.—Three bowshots far,
 Paused the deep front of England's war,
 And rested on their arms awhile,
 To close and rank their warlike file,
 And hold high council, if that night
 Should view the strife, or dawning light.

- xiv. O gay, yet fearful to behold,
 Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
 And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
 With plumes and pennons waving fair,
 Was that bright battle-front! for there
 Rode England's King and peers:
 And who, that saw that monarch ride,
 His kingdom battled by his side,
 Could then his direful doom foretell!—
 Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
 And in his sprightly eye was set
 Some spark of the Plantagenet.
 Though light and wandering was his glance,
 It flash'd at sight of shield and lance.
 "Know'st thou," he said, "De Argentine,
 Yon knight who marshals thus their line?"—
 "The tokens on his helmet tell
 The Bruce, my Liege: I know him well."—
 "And shall the audacious traitor brave
 The presence where our banners wave?"—
 "So please my Liege," said Argentine,
 "Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
 To give him fair and knightly chance,
 I would adventure forth my lance."—
 "In battle-day," the King replied,
 "Nice tourney rules are set aside.
 —Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
 Set on him—sweep him from our path!"
 And, at King Edward's signal, soon
 Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boune.

xv. Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renown'd for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.
—As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast.—Each breast beat high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse came!
The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
But, swerving from the Knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear.
Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course—but soon his course was o'er!—
High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!—
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
Springs from the blow the startled horse,
Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
—First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

xvi. One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead;
Then gently turn'd his palfrey's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gain'd his own array.
There round their King the leaders crowd,
And blame his recklessness aloud,
That risk'd 'gainst each adventurous spear
A life so valued and so dear.
His broken weapon's shaft survey'd
The King, and careless answer made,—
“My loss may pay my folly's tax;
I've broke my trusty battle-axe.”
'Twas then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
Did Isabel's commission show;
Edith, disguised at distance stands,

And hides her blushes with her hands.
 The Monarch's brow has changed its hue,
 Away the gory axe he threw,
 While to the seeming page he drew,
 Clearing war's terrors from his eye.
 Her hand with gentle ease he took,
 With such a kind protecting look,
 As to a weak and timid boy
 Might speak, that elder brother's care
 And elder brother's love were there.

- xvii. "Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"
 Then whisper'd, "Still that name be thine.
 Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
 Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
 And sends thee here in doubtful hour;
 But soon we are beyond her power;
 For on this chosen battle-plain,
 Victor or vanquish'd, I remain.
 Do thou to yonder hill repair;
 The followers of our host are there,
 And all who may not weapons bear.—
 Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care.—
 Joyful we meet, if all go well;
 If not, in Arran's holy cell
 Thou must take part with Isabel;
 For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath sworn,
 Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,
 (The bliss on earth he covets most,)
 Would he forsake his battle-post,
 Or shun the fortune that may fall
 To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all.—
 But, hark! some news these trumpets tell;
 Forgive my haste—farewell!—farewell!"—
 And in a lower voice he said,
 "Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"—

- xviii. "What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
 And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
 Our leftward flank?"—the Monarch cried,
 To Moray's Earl who rode beside.
 "Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
 Randolph, thy wreath has lost a rose."
 The Earl his visor closed, and said,
 "My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade.—
 Follow, my household!"—And they go
 Like lightning on the advancing foe.
 "My Liege," said noble Douglas then,
 "Earl Randolph has but one to ten:

Let me go forth his band to aid! "—
 —" Stir not. The error he hath made,
 Let him amend it as he may;
 I will not weaken mine array."
 Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
 And Douglas's brave heart swell'd high,—
 " My Liege," he said, " with patient ear
 I must not Moray's death-knell hear! "—
 " Then go—but speed thee back again."—
 Forth sprung the Douglas with his train:
 But, when they won a rising hill,
 He bade his followers hold them still.—
 " See, see! the routed Southern fly!
 The Earl hath won the victory.
 Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
 His banner towers above the press.
 Rein up; our presence would impair
 The fame we come too late to share."
 Back to the host the Douglas rode,
 And soon glad tidings are abroad,
 That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,
 His followers fled with loosen'd rein.—
 That skirmish closed the busy day,
 And couch'd in battle's prompt array,
 Each army on their weapons lay.

- xix. It was a night of lovely June,
 High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
 Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
 Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
 And, twined in links of silver bright,
 Her winding river lay.
 Ah, gentle planet! other sight
 Shall greet thee next returning night,
 Of broken arms and banners tore,
 And marshes dark with human gore,
 And piles of slaughter'd men and horse,
 And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
 And many a wounded wretch to plain
 Beneath thy silver light in vain!
 But now, from England's host, the cry
 Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
 While from the Scottish legions pass
 The murmur'd prayer, the early mass!—
 Here, numbers had presumption given;
 There, bands o'er-match'd sought aid from Heaven.

- xx. On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands
 The battle-field, fair Edith stands,

With serf and page unfit for war,
 To eye the conflict from afar.
 O! with what doubtful agony
 She sees the dawning tint the sky!—
 Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
 And glistens now Demayet dun;
 Is it the lark that carols shrill,
 Is it the bittern's early hum?
 No!—distant, but increasing still,
 The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,
 With the deep murmur of the drum.
 Responsive from the Scottish host,
 Pipe-clang and bugle sound were toss'd,
 His breast and brow each soldier cross'd,
 And started from the ground;
 Arm'd and array'd for instant fight,
 Rose archer, spearman, squire and knight,
 And in the pomp of battle bright
 The dread battalia frown'd.

- xxi. Now onward, and in open view,
 The countless ranks of England drew,
 Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
 When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
 And his deep roar sends challenge wide
 To all that bars his way!
 In front the gallant archers trode,
 The men-at-arms behind them rode,
 And midmost of the phalanx broad
 The Monarch held his sway.
 Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
 Around him waves a sea of plumes,
 Where many a knight in battle known,
 And some who spurs had first braced on,
 And deem'd that fight should see them won,
 King Edward's hests obey.
 De Argentine attends his side,
 With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride,
 Selected champions from the train,
 To wait upon his bridle-rein.
 Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
 —At once, before his sight amazed,
 Sunk banner, spear, and shield;
 Each weapon-point is downward sent,
 Each warrior to the ground is bent.
 "The rebels, Argentine, repent!
 For pardon they have kneel'd."—
 "Aye!—but they bend to other powers,
 And other pardon sue than ours!

See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!
Upon the spot where they have kneel'd,
These men will die, or win the field."—
—"Then prove we if they die or win!
Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin."

xxii. Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
Just as the Northern ranks arose,
Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows.
Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a pace,
Glanced at the intervening space,
And raised his left hand high;
To the right ear the cords they bring—
—At once ten thousand bow-strings ring,
Ten thousand arrows fly!
Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot;
As fiercely and as fast,
Forth whistling came the grey-goose wing
As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
Adown December's blast.
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide;
Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride,
If the fell shower may last!
Upon the right, behind the wood,
Each by his steed dismounted, stood
The Scottish chivalry;—
With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
His own keen heart, his eager train,
Until the archers gain'd the plain;
Then, "Mount, ye gallants free!"
He cried; and, vaulting from the ground,
His saddle every horseman found.
On high their glittering crests they toss,
As springs the wild-fire from the moss;
The shield hangs down on every breast,
Each ready lance is in the rest,
And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
"Forth, Marshal! on the peasant foe!
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!"

xxiii. Then spurs were dash'd in chargers' flanks,
They rush'd among the archer ranks.
No spears were there the shock to let,

No stakes to turn the charge were set,
 And how shall yeoman's armour slight,
 Stand the long lance and mace of might?
 Or what may their short swords avail,
 'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?
 Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
 High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
 And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
 Give note of triumph and of rout!
 Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
 Their English hearts the strife made good.
 Borne down at length on every side,
 Compell'd to flight, they scatter wide.—
 Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
 And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee!
 The broken bows of Bannock's shore
 Shall in the greenwood ring no more!
 Round Wakefield's merry May-pole now,
 The maids may twine the summer bough,
 May northward look with longing glance,
 For those that wont to lead the dance.
 For the blithe archers look in vain!
 Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
 Pierced through, trode down, by thousands slain,
 They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

- xxiv. The King with scorn beheld their flight.
 "Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight!
 Each braggart churl could boast before,
 Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!
 Fitter to plunder chase or park,
 Then make a manly foe their mark.—
 Forward, each gentleman and knight!
 Let gentle blood show generous might,
 And chivalry redeem the fight!"
 To rightward of the wild affray,
 The field show'd fair and level way;
 But, in mid-space, the Bruce's care
 Had bored the ground with many a pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
 That form'd a ghastly snare.
 Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
 With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,
 That panted for the shock!
 With blazing crests and banners spread,
 And trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
 The wide plain thunder'd to their tread,
 As far as Stirling rock.
 Down! down! in headlong overthrow,

Horseman and horse, the foremost go,
Wild floundering on the field!
The first are in destruction's gorge,
Their followers wildly o'er them urge;—
The knightly helm and shield,
The mail, the acton, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!
Loud from the mass confused the cry
Of dying warriors swells on high,
And steeds that shriek in agony!
They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
They broke like that same torrent's wave
When swallow'd by a darksome cave.
Billows on billows burst and boil,
Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own!

- xxv. Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight,
Her noblest all are here;
Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
Brought up the rearward battle-line.
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,
Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes met,
And, closing dark on every side,
Raged the full contest far and wide.
Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
And well did Stewart's actions grace
The sire of Scotland's royal race!
Firmly they kept their ground;
As firmly England onward press'd,
And down went many a noble crest,

And rent was many a valiant breast,
And Slaughter revell'd round.

xxvi. Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met;
The groans of those who fell
Were drown'd amid the shriller clang
That from the blades and harness rang,
And in the battle-yell.
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
Both Southern fierce and hardy Scot;
And O! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife!
The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
The Patriot for his country's claim;
This Knight his youthful strength to prove,
And that to win his lady's love;
Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
From habit some, or hardihood.
But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
The noble and the slave,
From various cause the same wild road,
On the same bloody morning, trode,
To that dark inn, the grave!

xxvii. The tug of strife to flag begins,
Though neither loses yet nor wins.
High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
And feebler speeds the blow and thrust.
Douglas leans on his war-sword now,
And Randolph wipes his bloody brow;
Nor less had toil'd each Southern knight,
From morn till mid-day in the fight.
Strong Egremont for air must gasp,
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere!
The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
Hath lost its lively tone;
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter heard,
"My merry-men, fight on!"

xxviii. Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy.
"One effort more, and Scotland's free!
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock;

Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge;

Now, forward to the shock!"

At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud King Robert's voice was known—
"Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail!
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,

The foe is fainting fast!

Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
For Scotland, liberty, and life,—

The battle cannot last!"

xxix. The fresh and desperate onset bore
The foes three furlongs back and more,
Leaving their noblest in their gore.

Alone, De Argentine

Yet bears on high his red-cross shield,
Gathers the relics of the field,
Renews the ranks where they have reel'd,

And still makes good the line.

Brief strife, but fierce,—his efforts raise
A bright but momentary blaze.

Fair Edith heard the Southron shout,
Beheld them turning from the rout,
Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.

That rallying force, combined anew,
Appear'd in her distracted view,

To hem the Islesmen round;

"O God! the combat they renew,

And is no rescue found!

And ye that look thus tamely on,

And see your native land o'erthrown,

O! are your hearts of flesh or stone?"

xxx. The multitude that watch'd afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,
Bondsman and serf; even female hand
Stretch'd to the hatchet or the brand;

But, when mute Amadine they heard
Give to their zeal his signal-word,

A frenzy fired the throng;

"Portents and miracles impeach

Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—
 And he that gives the mute his speech,
 Can bid the weak be strong.

To us, as to our lords, are given
 A native earth, a promised heaven;
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's wrongs;
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warms
 Our breasts as theirs—To arms, to arms!"
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they rear,
 And, like a banner'd host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war.

xxxI. Already scatter'd o'er the plain,
 Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
 The rearward squadrons fled amain,
 Or made but doubtful stay;—
 But when they mark'd the seeming show
 Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd foe,
 The boldest broke array.
 O give their hapless prince his due!
 In vain the royal Edward threw
 His person 'mid the spears,
 Cried, "Fight!" to terror and despair,
 Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
 And cursed their caitiff fears;
 Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
 And forced him from the fatal plain.
 With them rode Argentine, until
 They gain'd the summit of the hill,
 But quitted there the train:—
 "In yonder field a gage I left,—
 I must not live of fame bereft;
 I needs must turn again.
 Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
 The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
 I know his banner well.
 God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
 And many a happier field than this!—
 Once more, my Liege, farewell."

xxxII. Again he faced the battle-field,—
 Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
 "Now then," he said, and couch'd his spear,
 "My course is run, the goal is near;
 One effort more, one brave career,
 Must close this race of mine."
 Then in his stirrups rising high,
 He shouted loud his battle-cry,

"Saint James for Argentine!"
 And, of the bold pursuers, four
 The gallant knight from saddle bore;
 But not unharm'd—a lance's point
 Has found his breastplate's loosen'd joint,
 An axe has razed his crest;
 Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
 Who press'd the chase with gory sword,
 He rode with spear in rest,
 And through his bloody tartans bored,
 And through his gallant breast.
 Nail'd to the earth, the mountaineer
 Yet writhed him up against the spear,
 And swung his broadsword round!
 —Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way,
 Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
 The blood gush'd from the wound;
 And the grim Lord of Colonsay
 Hath turn'd him on the ground,
 And laugh'd in death-pang, that his blade
 The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII. Now toil'd the Bruce, the battle done,
 To use his conquest boldly won!
 And gave command for horse and spear
 To press the Southron's scatter'd rear,
 Nor let his broken force combine,
 —When the war-cry of Argentine
 Fell faintly on his ear;
 "Save, save his life," he cried, "O save
 The kind, the noble, and the brave!"
 The squadrons round free passage gave,
 The wounded knight drew near;
 He raised his red-cross shield no more,
 Helm, cuish, and breastplate stream'd with gore,
 Yet, as he saw the King advance,
 He strove even then to couch his lance—
 The effort was in vain!
 The spur-stroke fail'd to rouse the horse;
 Wounded and weary, in mid course
 He stumbled on the plain.
 Then foremost was the generous Bruce
 To raise his head, his helm to loose;—
 "Lord Earl, the day is thine!
 My Sovereign's charge, and adverse fate,
 Have made our meeting all too late:
 Yet this may Argentine,
 As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
 A Christian's mass, a soldier's grave."

- xxxiv. Bruce press'd his dying hand—its grasp
 Kindly replied ; but, in his clasp,
 It stiffen'd and grew cold—
 “ And, O farewell ! ” the victor cried,
 “ Of chivalry the flower and pride,
 The arm in battle bold,
 The courteous mien, the noble race,
 The stainless faith, the manly face!—
 Bid Ninian's convent light their shrine,
 For late-wake of De Argentine.
 O'er better knight on death-bier laid,
 Torch never gleam'd nor mass was said ! ”
- xxxv. Nor for De Argentine alone,
 Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
 And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.
 That yellow lustre glimmer'd pale,
 On broken plate and bloodied mail,
 Rent crest and shatter'd coronet,
 Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret ;
 And the best names that England knew,
 Claim'd in the death-prayer dismal due.
 Yet mourn not, Land of Fame!
 Though ne'er the leopards on thy shield
 Retreated from so sad a field,
 Since Norman William came.
 Oft may thine annals justly boast
 Of battles stern by Scotland lost ;
 Grudge not her victory,
 When for her freeborn rights she strove ;
 Rights dear to all who freedom love,
 To none so dear as thee !
- xxxvi. Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
 Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear ;
 With him, a hundred voices tell
 Of prodigy and miracle,
 “ For the mute page had spoke.”—
 “ Page ! ” said Fitz-Louis, “ rather say,
 An angel sent from realms of day,
 To burst the English yoke.
 I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
 When hurrying from the mountain top ;
 A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
 To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
 A step as light upon the green,
 As if his pinions waved unseen ! ”—
 “ Spoke he with none ? ”—“ With none—one word
 Burst when he saw the Island Lord,

Returning from the battle-field."—

"What answer made the chief?"—"He kneel'd,
Durst not look up, but mutter'd low,
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere."

xxxvii. Even upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heap'd then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor monarch's musings high,
Mirth laugh'd in good King Robert's eye,
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Roland kneel'd to him?" he said,
"Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambuskenneth straight ye pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay for high deliverance given,
A nation's thanks to gracious Heaven.
Let him array, besides, such state,
As should on princes' nuptials wait.
Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The bridal of the Maid of Lorn."

CONCLUSION

Go forth, my Song, upon thy venturous way;
Go boldly forth; nor yet thy master blame,
Who chose no patron for his humble lay,
And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,
Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path of fame.
There was—and O! how many sorrows crowd
Into these two brief words!—*there was* a claim
By generous friendship given—had fate allow'd,
It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud!

All angel now—yet little less than all,
While still a pilgrim in our world below!
What 'vails it us that patience to recall,
Which hid its own to soothe all other woe;
What 'vails to tell, how Virtue's purest glow
Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair;
And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,
That one poor garland, twined to deck thy hair,
Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there!

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

“ Upon another occasion, I sent up another of these trifles, which, like schoolboys' kites, served to show how the wind of popular taste was setting. The manner was supposed to be that of a rude minstrel, or Scald, in opposition to 'The Bridal of Triermain,' which was designed to belong rather to the Italian school. This new fugitive piece was called 'Harold the Dauntless;' and I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous. It encountered rather an odd fate. My ingenious friend, Mr. James Hogg, had published, about the same time, a work called the *Poetic Mirror*, containing imitations of the principal living poets. There was in it a very good imitation of my own style, which bore such a resemblance to 'Harold the Dauntless,' that there was no discovering the original from the imitation; and I believe that many who took the trouble of thinking upon the subject, were rather of opinion that my ingenious friend was the true, and not the fictitious Simon Pure.”—INTRODUCTION TO THE LORD OF THE ISLES. 1830.

INTRODUCTION

There is a mood of mind, we all have known
On drowsy eve, or dark and low'ring day,
When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone,
And nought can chase the lingering hours away.
Dull on our soul falls Fancy's dazzling ray,
And wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of pain?

The jolly sportsman knows such drearihood,
When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
Clouding that morn which threatens the heath-cock's brood;
Of such, in summer's drought, the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain;
But, more than all, the discontented fair,
Whom father stern, and sterner aunt, restrain
From county-ball, or race occurring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.

Ennui!—or, as our mothers call'd thee, Spleen!
To thee we owe full many a rare device;—
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
The rolling billiard-ball, the rattling dice,

The turning-lathe for framing gimcrack nice;
The amateur's blotch'd pallet thou mayst claim,
Retort, and air-pump, threatening frogs and mice,
(Murders disguised by philosophic name,)
And much of trifling grave, and much of buxom game.

Then of the books, to catch thy drowsy glance
Complied, what bard the catalogue may quote!
Plays, poems, novels, never read but once;—
But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
That bears thy name, and is thine antidote;
And not of such the strain my Thomson sung,
Delicious dreams inspiring by his note,
What time to Indolence his harp he strung;—
Oh! might my lay be rank'd that happier list among!

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
For me, I love my study-fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale,
Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme;
While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,
Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the Romancer's tale becomes the Reader's dream.

'Tis thus my malady I well may bear,
Albeit outstretch'd, like Pope's own Paridel,
Upon the rack of a too-easy chair;
And find, to cheat the time, a powerful spell
In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
Or later legends of the Fairy-folk,
Or Oriental tale of Afrite fell.
Of Genii, Talisman, and broad-wing'd Roc,
Though taste may blush and frown, and sober reason mock.

Oft at such season, too, will rhymes unsought
Arrange themselves in some romantic lay;
The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day.—
These few survive—and proudly let me say,
Court not the critic's smile, nor dread his frown;
They well may serve to while an hour away,
Nor does the volume ask for more renown,
Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it down.

CANTO FIRST

- I. List to the valorous deeds that were done
By Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son!

Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.
Woe to the realms which he coasted! for there
Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
Rape of maiden, and slaughter of priest,
Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast:
When he hoisted his standard black,
Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
And he burn'd the churches, that heathen Dane,
To light his band to their barks again.

- II. On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
The winds of France had his banners blown;
Little was there to plunder, yet still
His pirates had foray'd on Scottish hill;
But upon merry England's coast
More frequent he sail'd, for he won the most.
So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
If a sail but gleam'd white 'gainst the welkin blue,
Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
Burghers hasten'd to man the wall,
Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
Bells were toll'd out, and aye as they rung
Fearful and faintly the grey brother's sung,
"Bless us, St. Mary, from flood and from fire,
From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire!"

- III. He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
He enter'd the Humber in fearful hour,
And disembark'd with his Danish power.
Three Earls came against him with all their train,—
Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain.
Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
But the Saxon King was a sire in age,
Weak in battle, in council sage;
Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought;
And the Count took upon him the peaceable style
Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

- iv. Time will rust the sharpest sword,
Time will consume the strongest cord;
That which moulders hemp and steel,
Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
Of the Danish band, whom Count Witikind led,
Many wax'd aged, and many were dead:
Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair;
He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode.
As he grew feebler, his wildness ceased,
He made himself peace with prelate and priest.—
Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
Patiently listed the counsel they said:
Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy and grave,
Wise and good was the counsel he gave.
- v. "Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
Time it is thy poor soul were assoil'd;
Priests didst thou slay, and churches burn,
Time it is now to repentance to turn;
Fiends hast thou worshipp'd, with fiendish rite,
Leave now the darkness, and wend into light:
O! while life and space are given,
Turn thee yet, and think of Heaven!"
That stern old heathen his head he raised,
And on the good prelate he stedfastly gazed;
"Give me broad lands on the Wear and the Tyne,
My faith I will leave, and I'll cleave unto thine."
- vi. Broad lands he gave him on Tyne and Wear,
To be held of the church by bridle and spear;
Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tynedale part,
To better his will, and to soften his heart:
Count Witikind was a joyful man,
Less for the faith than the lands that he wan.
The high church of Durham is dress'd for the day,
The clergy are rank'd in their solemn array:
There came the Count, in a bear-skin warm,
Leaning on Hilda his concubine's arm.
He kneel'd before Saint Cuthbert's shrine,
With patience unwonted at rites divine;
He abjured the gods of heathen race,
And he bent his head at the font of grace.
But such was the grisly old proselyte's look,
That the priest who baptised him grew pale and
shook,
And the old monks mutter'd beneath their hood,
"Of a stem so stubborn can never spring good!"

- VII. Up then arose that grim convertite,
Homeward he hied him when ended the rite;
The Prelate in honour will with him ride,
And feast in his castle on Tyne's fair side.
Banners and banderols danced in the wind,
Monks rode before them, and spearmen behind;
Onward they pass'd, till fairly did shine
Pennon and cross on the bosom of Tyne;
And full in front did that fortress lower,
In darksome strength with its buttress and tower:
At the castle gate was young Harold there,
Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.
- VIII. Young Harold was fear'd for his hardihood,
His strength of frame, and his fury of mood.
Rude he was and wild to behold,
Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
Cap of vair nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal day:
His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
Uncover'd his head, and his sandal unlaced:
His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
And his eyes glanced through them a swarthy glow;
A Danish club in his hand he bore,
The spikes were clotted with recent gore;
At his back a she-wolf, and her wolf-cubs twain,
In the dangerous chase that morning slain.
Rude was the greeting his father he made,
None to the Bishop,—while thus he said:—
- IX. "What priest-led hypocrite art thou,
With thy humbled look and thy monkish brow,
Like a shaveling who studies to cheat his vow?
Can'st thou be Witikind the Waster known,
Royal Eric's fearless son,
Haughty Gunhilda's haughtier lord,
Who won his bride by the axe and sword;
From the shrine of St. Peter the chalice who tore,
And melted to bracelets for Freya and Thor;
With one blow of his gauntlet who burst the skull,
Before Odin's stone, of the Mountain Bull?
Then ye worshipp'd with rites that to war-gods
belong,
With the deed of the brave, and the blow of the
strong;
And now, in thine age to dotage sunk,
Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a shaven monk,—
Lay down thy mail-shirt for clothing of hair,—
Fasting and scourge, like a slave, wilt thou bear?

- Or, at best, be admitted in slothful bower
To batten with priest and with paramour?
Oh! out upon thine endless shame!
Each Scald's high harp shall blast thy fame,
And thy son will refuse thee a father's name!"
- x. Ireful wax'd old Witikind's look,
His faltering voice with fury shook:—
"Hear me, Harold of harden'd heart!
Stubborn and wilful ever thou wert.
Thine outrage insane I command thee to cease,
Fear my wrath and remain at peace:—
Just is the debt of repentance I've paid,
Richly the church has a recompense made,
And the truth of her doctrines I prove with my blade,
But reckoning to none of my actions I owe,
And least to my son such accounting will show.
Why speak I to thee of repentance or truth,
Who ne'er from thy childhood knew reason or ruth?
Hence! to the wolf and the bear in her den;
These are thy mates, and not rational men."
- xi. Grimly smiled Harold, and coldly replied,
"We must honour our sires, if we fear when they chide.
For me, I am yet what thy lessons have made,
I was rock'd in a buckler and fed from a blade;
An infant, was taught to clasp hands and to shout
From the roofs of the tower when the flame had broke
out;
In the blood of slain foemen my finger to dip,
And tinge with its purple my cheek and my lip.—
'Tis thou know'st not truth, that hast barter'd in eld,
For a price, the brave faith that thine ancestors held.
When this wolf,"—and the carcass he flung on the
plain,—
"Shall awake and give food to her nurslings again,
The face of his father will Harold review;
Till then, aged Heathen, young Christian, adieu!"
- xii. Priest, monk, and prelate, stood aghast,
As through the pageant the heathen pass'd.
A cross-bearer out of his saddle he flung,
Laid his hand on the pommel, and into it sprung.
Loud was the shriek, and deep the groan,
When the holy sign on the earth was thrown!
The fierce old Count unsheathed his brand,
But the calmer Prelate stay'd his hand.
"Let him pass free!—Heaven knows its hour,—
But he must own repentance's power,

Pray and weep, and penance bear,
 Ere he hold land by the Tyne and the Wear."
 Thus in scorn and in wrath from his father is gone
 Young Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XIII. High was the feasting in Witikind's hall,
 Revell'd priests, soldiers, and pagans, and all;
 And e'en the good Bishop was fain to endure
 The scandal, which time and instruction might cure;
 It were dangerous, he deem'd, at the first to restrain,
 In his wine and his wassail, a half-christen'd Dane.
 The mead flow'd around, and the ale was drain'd dry,
 Wild was the laughter, the song, and the cry;
 With Kyrie Eleison, came clamorously in
 The war-songs of Danesmen, Norweyan, and Finn,
 Till man after man the contention gave o'er,
 Outstretch'd on the rushes that strew'd the hall floor;
 And the tempest within, having ceased its wild rout,
 Gave place to the tempest that thunder'd without.

XIV. Apart from the wassail, in turret alone,
 Lay flaxen-hair'd Gunnar, old Ermengarde's son;
 In the train of Lord Harold that Page was the first,
 For Harold in childhood had Ermengarde nursed;
 And grieved was young Gunnar his master should
 roam,
 Unhoused and unfriended, an exile from home.
 He heard the deep thunder, the plashing of rain,
 He saw the red lightning through shot-hole and pane;
 "And oh!" said the Page, "on the shelterless wold
 Lord Harold is wandering in darkness and cold!
 What though he was stubborn, and wayward, and
 wild,
 He endured me because I was Ermengarde's child,—
 And often from dawn till the set of the sun,
 In the chase, by his stirrup, unbidden I run;
 I would I were older, and knighthood could bear,
 I would soon quit the banks of the Tyne and the
 Wear:
 For my mother's command, with her last parting
 breath,
 Bade me follow her nursling in life and to death.

xv. "It pours and it thunders, it lightens amain,
 As if Lok, the Destroyer, had burst from his chain!
 Accursed by the Church, and expell'd by his sire,
 Nor Christian nor Dane give him shelter or fire,
 And this tempest what mortal may houseless endure?
 Unaided, unmantled, he dies on the moor!

Whate'er comes of Gunnar, he tarries not here."
He leapt from his couch and he grasp'd to his spear;
Sought the hall of the feast. Undisturb'd by his
tread,

The wassailers slept fast as the sleep of the dead:
"Ungrateful and bestial!" his anger broke forth,
"To forget 'mid your goblets the pride of the North!
And you, ye cowl'd priests, who have plenty in store,
Must give Gunnar for ransom a palfrey and ore."

- xvi. Then, heeding full little of ban or of curse,
He has seized on the Prior of Jorvaux's purse:
Saint Meneholt's Abbot next morning has miss'd
His mantle, deep furr'd from the cape to the wrist:
The Seneschal's keys from his belt he has ta'en,
(Well drench'd on that eve was old Hildebrand's
brain.)

To the stable-yard he made his way,
And mounted the Bishop's palfrey gay,
Castle and hamlet behind him has cast,
And right on his way to the moorland has pass'd.
Sore snorted the palfrey, unused to face
A weather so wild at so rash a pace;
So long he snorted, so loud he neigh'd,
There answer'd a steed that was bound beside,
And the red flash of lightning show'd there where lay
His master, Lord Harold, outstretch'd on the clay.

- xvii. Up he started, and thunder'd out, "Stand!"
And raised the club in his deadly hand.
The flaxen-hair'd Gunnar his purpose told,
Show'd the palfrey and proffer'd the gold.
"Back, back, and home, thou simple boy!
Thou canst not share my grief or joy:
Have I not mark'd thee wail and cry
When thou hast seen a sparrow die?
And canst thou, as my follower should,
Wade ankle-deep through foeman's blood,
Dare mortal and immortal foe,
The gods above, the fiends below,
And man on earth, more hateful still,
The very fountain-head of ill?
Desperate of life, and careless of death,
Lover of bloodshed, and slaughter, and scathe,
Such must thou be with me to roam,
And such thou canst not be—back, and home!"

- xviii. Young Gunnar shook like an aspen bough,
As he heard the harsh voice and beheld the dark
brow,

And half he repented his purpose and vow.
 But now to draw back were bootless shame,
 And he loved his master, so urged his claim:
 "Alas! if my arm and my courage be weak,
 Bear with me a while for old Ermengarde's sake;
 Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar's faith,
 As to fear he would break it for peril of death.
 Have I not risk'd it to fetch thee this gold,
 This surcoat and mantle to fence thee from cold?
 And, did I bear a baser mind,
 What lot remains if I stay behind?
 The priests' revenge, thy father's wrath,
 A dungeon, and a shameful death."

- xix. With gentler look Lord Harold eyed
 The Page, then turn'd his head aside;
 And either a tear did his eyelash stain,
 Or it caught a drop of the passing rain.
 "Art thou an outcast, then?" quoth he;
 "The meeter page to follow me."
 'Twere bootless to tell what climes they sought,
 Ventures achieved, and battles fought;
 How oft with few, how oft alone,
 Fierce Harold's arm the field hath won.
 Men swore his eye, that flash'd so red
 When each other glance was quench'd with dread,
 Bore oft a light of deadly flame,
 That ne'er from mortal courage came.
 Those limbs so strong, that mood so stern,
 That loved the couch of heath and fern,
 Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
 More than to rest on driven down;
 That stubborn frame, that sullen mood,
 Men deem'd must come of aught but good;
 And they whisper'd, the great Master Fiend was at
 one
 With Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

- xx. Years after years had gone and fled,
 The good old Prelate lies lapp'd in lead;
 In the chapel still is shown
 His sculptured form on a marble stone,
 With staff and ring and scapulaire,
 And folded hands in the act of prayer.
 Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting now
 On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldingar's brow;
 The power of his crozier he loved to extend
 O'er whatever would break, or whatever would bend;
 And now hath he clothed him in cope and in pall,

And the Chapter of Durham has met at his call.
"And hear ye not, brethren," the proud Bishop said,
"That our vassal, the Danish Count Witikind's dead?
All his gold and his goods hath he given
To holy Church for the love of Heaven,
And hath founded a chantry with stipend and dole,
That priests and that beadsmen may pray for his soul:
Harold his son is wandering abroad,
Dreaded by man and abhorr'd by God;
Meet it is not, that such should heir
The lands of the church on the Tyne and the Wear,
And at her pleasure, her hallow'd hands
May now resume these wealthy lands."

- xxi. Answer'd good Eustace, a canon old,—
"Harold is tameless, and furious, and bold;
Ever Renown blows a note of fame,
And a note of fear, when she sounds his name:
Much of bloodshed and much of scathe
Have been their lot who have waked his wrath.
Leave him these lands and lordships still,
Heaven in its hour may change his will;
But if reft of gold, and of living bare,
An evil counsellor is despair."
More had he said, but the Prelate frown'd,
And murmur'd his brethren who sate around,
And with one consent have they given their doom,
That the Church should the lands of Saint Cuthbert
resume.
So will'd the Prelate; and canon and dean
Gave to his judgment their loud amen.

CANTO SECOND

- i. 'Tis merry in greenwood,—thus runs the old lay,—
In the gladsome month of lively May,
When the wild birds' song on stem and spray
Invites to forest bower;
Then rears the ash his airy crest,
Then shines the birch in silver vest,
And the beech in glistening leaves is drest,
And dark between shows the oak's proud breast,
Like a chieftain's frowning tower;
Though a thousand branches join their screen,
Yet the broken sunbeams glance between,
And tip the leaves with lighter green,
With brighter tints the flower:

Dull is the heart that loves not then
 The deep recess of the wildwood glen,
 Where roe and red-deer find sheltering den,
 When the sun is in his power.

- II. Less merry, perchance, is the fading leaf
 That follows so soon on the gather'd sheaf,
 When the greenwood loses the name;
 Silent is then the forest bound,
 Save the redbreast's note, and the rustling sound
 Of frost-nipt leaves that are dropping round
 Or the deep-mouth'd cry of the distant hound
 That opens on his game:
 Yet then, too, I love the forest wide,
 Whether the sun in splendour ride,
 And gild its many-colour'd side;
 Or whether the soft and silvery haze,
 In vapoury folds, o'er the landscape strays,
 And half involves the woodland maze,
 Like an early widow's veil,
 Where wimpling tissue from the gaze
 The form half hides, and half betrays,
 Of beauty wan and pale.

- III. Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
 Her father a rover of greenwood shade,
 By forest statutes undismay'd,
 Who lived by bow and quiver;
 Well known was Wulfstane's archery,
 By merry Tyne both on moor and lea,
 Through wooded Weardale's glens so free,
 Well beside Stanhope's wildwood tree,
 And well on Gablesse river.
 Yet free though he trespass'd on woodland game,
 More known and more fear'd was the wizard fame
 Of Jutta of Rookhope, the Outlaw's dame;
 Fear'd when she frown'd was her eye of flame,
 More fear'd when in wrath she laugh'd;
 For then, 'twas said, more fatal true
 To its dread aim her spell-glance flew,
 Than when from Wulfstane's bended yew
 Sprung forth the grey-goose shaft.
- IV. Yet had this fierce and dreaded pair,
 So Heaven decreed, a daughter fair;
 None brighter crown'd the bed,
 In Britain's bounds, of peer or prince,
 Nor hath, perchance, a lovelier since
 In this fair isle been bred.

And nought of fraud, or ire, or ill,
 Was known to gentle Metelill,—
 A simple maiden she;
 The spells in dimpled smile that lie,
 And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
 With the sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
 Were her arms and witchery.
 So young, so simple was she yet,
 She scarce could childhood's joys forget,
 And still she loved, in secret set
 Beneath the greenwood tree,
 To plait the rushy coronet,
 And braid with flowers her locks of jet,
 As when in infancy;—
 Yet could that heart, so simple, prove
 The early dawn of stealing love:
 Ah! gentle maid, beware!
 The power who, now so mild a guest,
 Gives dangerous yet delicious zest
 To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
 Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest,
 Let none his empire share.

- v. One morn, in kirtle green array'd,
 Deep in the wood the maiden stray'd,
 And, where a fountain sprung,
 She sate her down, unseen, to thread
 The scarlet berry's mimic braid,
 And while the beads she strung,
 Like the blithe lark, whose carol gay
 Gives a good-morrow to the day,
 So lightsomely she sung.

SONG

- vi. " Lord William was born in gilded bower,
 The heir of Wilton's lofty tower;
 Yet better loves Lord William now
 To roam beneath wild Rookhope's brow;
 And William has lived where ladies fair
 With gawds and jewels deck their hair,
 Yet better loves the dewdrops still
 That pearl the locks of Metelill.

" The pious Palmer loves, I wis,
 Saint Cuthbert's hallow'd beads to kiss;
 But I, though simple girl I be,
 Might have such homage paid to me;
 For did Lord William see me suit
 This necklace of the bramble's fruit,

Hé fain—but must not have his will—
Would kiss the beads of Metelill.

“ My nurse has told me many a tale,
How vows of love are weak and frail;
My mother says that courtly youth
By rustic maid means seldom sooth.
What should they mean? it cannot be,
That such a warning's meant for me,
For nought—oh! nought of fraud or ill
Can William mean to Metelill! ”

VII. Sudden she stops—and starts to feel
A weighty hand, a glove of steel,
Upon her shrinking shoulders laid;
Fearful she turn'd, and saw, dismay'd,
A Knight in plate and mail array'd,
His crest and bearing worn and fray'd,
His surcoat soil'd and riven,
Form'd like that giant race of yore,
Whose long-continued crimes outwore
The sufferance of Heaven.
Stern accents made his pleasure known,
Though then he used his gentlest tone:
“ Maiden,” he said, “ sing forth thy glee.
Start not—sing on—it pleases me.”

VIII. Secured within his powerful hold,
To bend her knee, her hands to fold,
Was all the maiden might;
And “ Oh! forgive,” she faintly said,
“ The terrors of a simple maid,
If thou art mortal wight!
But if—of such strange tales are told—
Unearthly warrior of the wold,
Thou comest to chide mine accents bold,
My mother, Jutta, knows the spell,
At noon and midnight pleasing well
The disembodied ear.
Oh! let her powerful charms atone
For aught my rashness may have done,
And cease thy grasp of fear.”
Then laugh'd the Knight—his laughter's sound
Half in the hollow helmet drown'd;
His barred visor then he raised,
And steady on the maiden gazed.
He smooth'd his brows, as best he might,
To the dread calm of autumn night,
When sinks the tempest roar;

Yet still the cautious fishers eye
The clouds, and fear the gloomy sky,
And haul their barks on shore.

- ix. "Damsel," he said, "be wise, and learn
Matters of weight and deep concern:
From distant realms I come,
And, wanderer long, at length have plann'd
In this my native Northern land
To seek myself a home.
Nor that alone—a mate I seek;
She must be gentle, soft, and meek,—
No lordly dame for me;
Myself am something rough of mood,
And feel the fire of royal blood,
And therefore do not hold it good
To match in my degree.
Then, since coy maidens say my face
Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
For a fair lineage to provide,
'Tis meet that my selected bride
In lineaments be fair;
I love thine well—till now I ne'er
Look'd patient on a face of fear,
But now that tremulous sob and tear
Become thy beauty rare.
One kiss—nay, damsel, coy it not!—
And now go seek thy parents' cot,
And say, a bridegroom soon I come,
To woo my love, and bear her home."
- x. Home sprung the maid without a pause,
As leveret 'scaped from greyhound's jaws;
But still she lock'd, howe'er distress'd,
The secret in her boding breast;
Dreading her sire, who oft forbade
Her steps should stray to distant glade.
Night came—to her accustom'd nook
Her distaff aged Jutta took,
And by the lamp's imperfect glow,
Rough Wulfstane trimm'd his shafts and bow.
Sudden and clamorous, from the ground
Upstart'd slumbering brach and hound;
Loud knocking next the lodge alarms,
And Wulfstane snatches at his arms,
When open flew the yielding door,
And that grim Warrior press'd the floor.
- xi. "All peace be here—What! none replies?
Dismiss your fears and your surprise.

'Tis I—that Maid hath told my tale,—
 Or, trembler, did thy courage fail?
 It recks not—it is I demand
 Fair Metelill in marriage band;
 Harold the Dauntless I, whose name
 Is brave men's boast and caitiff's shame.
 The parents sought each other's eyes,
 With awe, resentment, and surprise:
 Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt, began
 The stranger's size and thewes to scan;
 But as he scann'd, his courage sunk,
 And from unequal strife he shrunk,
 Then forth, to blight and blemish, flies
 The harmful curse from Jutta's eyes;
 Yet, fatal howsoe'er, the spell
 On Harold innocently fell!
 And disappointment and amaze
 Were in the witch's wilder'd gaze.

- xii. But soon the wit of woman woke,
 And to the Warrior mild she spoke:
 "Her child was all too young."—"A toy,
 The refuge of a maiden coy."—
 Again, "A powerful baron's heir
 Claims in her heart an interest fair."—
 "A trifle—whisper in his ear,
 That Harold is a suitor here!"—
 Baffled at length she sought delay:
 "Would not the Knight till morning stay?
 Late was the hour—he there might rest
 Till morn, their lodge's honour'd guest."
 Such were her words,—her craft might cast,
 Her honour'd guest should sleep his last:
 "No, not to-night—but soon," he swore,
 "He would return, nor leave them more."
 The threshold then his huge stride crost,
 And soon he was in darkness lost.

- xiii. Appall'd a while the parents stood,
 Then changed their fear to angry mood,
 And foremost fell their words of ill
 On unresisting Metelill:
 Was she not caution'd and forbid,
 Forewarn'd, implored, accused and chid,
 And must she still to greenwood roam,
 To marshal such misfortune home?
 "Hence, minion—to thy chamber hence—
 There prudence learn, and penitence."
 She went—her lonely couch to steep

In tears which absent lovers weep;
Or if she gain'd a troubled sleep,
Fierce Harold's suit was still the theme
And terror of her feverish dream.

xiv. Scarce was she gone, her dame and sire
Upon each other bent their ire;
"A woodsman thou, and hast a spear,
And couldst thou such an insult bear?"
Sullen he said, "A man contends
With men, a witch with sprites and fiends;
Not to mere mortal wight belong
Yon gloomy brow and frame so strong.
But thou—is this thy promise fair,
That your Lord William, wealthy heir
To Ulrick, Baron of Witton-le-Wear,
Should Metelill to altar bear?
Do all the spells thou boast'st as thine
Serve but to slay some peasant's kine,
His grain in autumn's storms to steep,
Or thorough fog and fen to sweep,
And hag-ride some poor rustic's sleep?
Is such mean mischief worth the fame
Of sorceress and witch's name?
Fame, which with all men's wish conspires,
With thy deserts and my desires,
To damn thy corpse to penal fires?
Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
What now shall put thy schemes in joint?
What save this trusty arrow's point,
From the dark dingle when it flies,
And he who meets it gasps and dies."

xv. Stern she replied, "I will not wage
War with thy folly or thy rage;
But ere the morrow's sun be low,
Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know,
If I can venge me on a foe.
Believe the while, that whatso'er
I spoke, in ire, of bow and spear,
It is not Harold's destiny
The death of pilfer'd deer to die.
But he, and thou, and yon pale moon,
(That shall be yet more pallid soon,
Before she sink behind the dell,
Thou, she, and Harold too, shall tell
What Jutta knows of charm or spell."
Thus muttering, to the door she bent
Her wayward steps, and forth she went,

And left alone the moody sire,
To cherish or to slake his ire.

- xvi. Far faster than belong'd to age
Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
A priest has met her as she pass'd,
And cross'd himself and stood aghast:
She traced a hamlet—not a cur
His throat would ope, his foot would stir;
By crouch, by trembling, and by groan,
They made her hated presence known!
But when she trode the sable fell,
Were wilder sounds her way to tell,—
For far was heard the fox's yell,
The black-cock waked and faintly crew,
Scream'd o'er the moss the scared curlew;
Where o'er the cataract the oak
Lay slant, was heard the raven's croak;
The mountain-cat, which sought his prey,
Glared, scream'd, and started from her way.
Such music cheer'd her journey lone
To the deep dell and rocking stone:
There, with unhallow'd hymn of praise,
She called a God of heathen days.

INVOCATION

- xvii. "From thy Pomeranian throne,
Hewn in rock of living stone,
Where, to thy godhead faithful yet,
Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
And their swords in vengeance whet,
That shall make thine altars wet,
Wet and red for ages more
With the Christians' hated gore,—
Hear me! Sovereign of the Rock,
Hear me! mighty Zerneck!

"Mightiest of the mighty known,
Here thy wonders have been shown;
Hundred tribes in various tongue
Oft have here thy praises sung;
Down that stone with Runic seam'd,
Hundred victims' blood hath stream'd!
Now one woman comes alone,
And but wets it with her own,
The last, the feeblest of thy flock,—
Hear—and be present, Zerneck!

"Hark! he comes! the night-blast cold
Wilder sweeps along the wold;
The cloudless moon grows dark and dim,
And bristling hair and quaking limb
Proclaim the Master Demon nigh,—
Those who view his form shall die!
Lo! I stoop and veil my head;
Thou who ridest the tempest dread,
Shaking hill and rending oak—
Spare me! spare me! Zerneck.

"He comes not yet! Shall cold delay
Thy votaress at her need repay?
Thou—shall I call thee god or fiend?—
Let others on thy mood attend
With prayer and ritual—Jutta's arms
Are necromantic words and charms;
Mine is the spell, that, utter'd once,
Shall wake Thy Master from his trance,
Shake his red mansion-house of pain,
And burst his seven-times-twisted chain!—
So! com'st thou ere the spell is spoke?
I own thy presence, Zerneck."

- xviii. "Daughter of dust," the Deep Voice said,
—Shook while it spoke the vale for dread,
Rock'd on the base that massive stone,
The Evil Deity to own,—
"Daughter of dust! not mine the power
Thou seek'st on Harold's fatal hour.
'Twixt heaven and hell there is a strife
Waged for his soul and for his life,
And fain would we the combat win,
And snatch him in his hour of sin.
There is a star now rising red,
That threatens him with an influence dread:
Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
To use the space before it set.
Involve him with the church in strife,
Push on adventurous chance his life;
Ourself will in the hour of need,
As best we may thy counsels speed."
So ceased the Voice; for seven leagues round
Each hamlet started at the sound;
But slept again, as slowly died
Its thunders on the hill's brown side.

- xix. "And is this all," said Jutta stern,
"That thou can'st teach and I can learn?"

Hence! to the land of fog and waste,
 There fittest is thine influence placed,
 Thou powerless, sluggish Deity!
 But ne'er shall Briton bend the knee
 Again before so poor a god."
 She struck the altar with her rod;
 Slight was the touch, as when at need
 A damsel stirs her tardy steed;
 But to the blow the stone gave place,
 And, starting from its balanced base,
 Roll'd thundering down the moonlight dell,—
 Re-echo'd moorland, rock, and fell;
 Into the moonlight tarn it dash'd,
 Their shores the sounding surges lash'd,
 And there was ripple, rage, and foam;
 But on that lake, so dark and lone,
 Placid and pale the moonbeam shone
 As Jutta hied her home.

CANTO THIRD

- I. Grey towers of Durham! there was once a time
 I view'd your battlements with such vague hope,
 As brightens life in its first dawning prime;
 Not that e'en then came within fancy's scope
 A vision vain of mitre, throne, or cope;
 Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
 Her flattering dreams would in perspective ope
 Some reverend room, some prebendary's stall,—
 And thus Hope me deceived as she deceiveth all.

Well yet I love thy mix'd and massive piles,
 Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,
 And long to roam these venerable aisles,
 With records stored of deeds long since forgot;
 There might I share my Surtees' happier lot,
 Who leaves at will his patrimonial field
 To ransack every crypt and hallow'd spot,
 And from oblivion rend the spoils they yield,
 Restoring priestly chant and clang of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish—since other cares demand
 Each vacant hour, and in another clime;
 But still that northern harp invites my hand,
 Which tells the wonder of thine earlier time;
 And fain its numbers would I now command
 To paint the beauties of that dawning fair,

When Harold, gazing from its lofty stand
Upon the western heights of Beaurepaire,
Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt by winding Wear.

II. Fair on the half-seen streams the sunbeams danced
Betraying it beneath the woodland bank,
And fair between the Gothic turrets glanced
Broad lights, and shadows fell on front and flank,
Where tower and buttress rose in martial rank,
And girdled in the massive donjon Keep,
And from their circuit peal'd o'er bush and bank
The matin bell with summons long and deep,
And echo answer'd still with long-resounding sweep.

III. The morning mists rose from the ground,
Each merry bird awaken'd round,
As if in revelry;
Afar the bugles' clanging sound
Call'd to the chase the lagging hound;
The gale breathed soft and free,
And seem'd to linger on its way
To catch fresh odours from the spray,
And waved it in its wanton play
So light and gamesomely.
The scenes which morning beams reveal,
Its sounds to hear, its gales to feel
In all their fragrance round him steal,
It melted Harold's heart of steel,
And, hardly wotting why,
He doff'd his helmet's gloomy pride,
And hung it on a tree beside,
Laid mace and falchion by,
And on the greensward sate him down,
And from his dark habitual frown
Relax'd his rugged brow—
Whoever hath the doubtful task
From that stern Dane a boon to ask,
Were wise to ask it now.

IV. His place beside young Gunnar took,
And mark'd his master's softening look,
And in his eye's dark mirror spied
The gloom of stormy thoughts subside.
And cautious watch'd the fittest tide
To speak a warning word.
So when the torrent's billows shrink,
The timid pilgrim on the brink
Waits long to see them wave and sink,
Ere he dare brave the ford,

And often, after doubtful pause,
 His step advances or withdraws:
 Fearful to move the slumbering ire
 Of his stern lord, thus stood the squire,
 Till Harold raised his eye,
 That glanced as when athwart the shroud
 Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
 The bursting sunbeams fly.

- v. "Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
 Offspring of prophetess and bard!
 Take harp, and greet this lovely prime
 With some high strain of Runic rhyme,
 Strong, deep, and powerful! Peal it round
 Like that loud bell's sonorous sound,
 Yet wild by fits, as when the lay
 Of bird and bugle hail the day.
 Such was my grandsire Eric's sport,
 When dawn gleam'd on his martial court.
 Heymar the Scald, with harp's high sound,
 Summon'd the chiefs who slept around;
 Couch'd on the spoils of wolf and bear,
 They roused like lions from their lair,
 Then rush'd in emulation forth
 To enhance the glories of the North.—
 Proud Eric, mightiest of thy race,
 Where is thy shadowy resting-place?
 In wild Valhalla hast thou quaff'd
 From foeman's skull metheglin draught,
 Or wanderest where thy cairn was piled
 To frown o'er oceans wide and wild?
 Or have the milder Christians given
 Thy refuge in their peaceful heaven?
 Where'er thou art, to thee are known
 Our toils endured, our trophies won,
 Our wars, our wanderings, and our woes."
 He ceased, and Gunnar's song arose.

SONG

- vi. "Hawk and osprey scream'd for joy
 O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
 Crimson foam the beach o'erspread,
 The heath was dyed with darker red,
 When o'er Eric, Inguar's son,
 Dane and Northman piled the stone;
 Singing wild the war-song stern,
 'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!'

"Where eddying currents foam and boil
 By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's isle,

The seaman sees a martial form
Half-mingled with the mist and storm.
In anxious awe he bears away
To moor his bark in Stromna's bay,
And murmurs from the bounding stern,
'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!'

"What cares disturb the mighty dead?
Each honour'd rite was duly paid;
No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
Thy sword, thy shield, were near thee placed,—
Thy flinty couch no tear profaned,
Without, with hostile blood was stain'd;
Within, 'twas lined with moss and fern,—
Then rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!—

"He may not rest: from realms afar
Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody hand
On Carmel's cliffs and Jordan's strand,
When Odin's warlike son could daunt
The turban'd race of Termagaunt."—

- vii. "Peace," said the Knight, "the noble Scald
Our warlike fathers' deeds recall'd,
But never strove to soothe the son
With tales of what himself had done.
At Odin's board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne'er stoop'd to flattery;
But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to say."
With doubtful smile young Gunnar eyed
His master's looks, and nought replied—
But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.
"Is it to me, thou timid youth,
Thou fear'st to speak unwelcome truth?
My soul no more thy censure grieves
Than frosts rob laurels of their leaves.
Say on—and yet—beware the rude
And wild distemper of my blood;
Loth were I that mine ire should wrong
The youth that bore my shield so long,
And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong in will."—
"Oh!" quoth the page, "even there depends
My counsel—there my warning tends—
Oft seems as of my master's breast
Some demon were the sudden guest;

Then at the first misconstrued word
 His hand is on the mace and sword,
 From her firm seat his wisdom driven,
 His life to countless dangers given.—
 O! would that Gunnar could suffice
 To be the fiend's last sacrifice,
 So that, when glutted with my gore,
 He fled and tempted thee no more!"

- VIII. Then waved his hand, and shook his head
 The impatient Dane, while thus he said:
 "Profane not, youth—it is not thine
 To judge the spirit of our line—
 The bold Berserker's rage divine,
 Through whose inspiring, deeds are wrought
 Past human strength and human thought.
 When full upon his gloomy soul
 The champion feels the influence roll,
 He swims the lake, he leaps the wall—
 Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs the fall—
 Unshielded, mail-less, on he goes
 Singly against a host of foes;
 Their spears he holds like wither'd reeds,
 Their mail like maiden's silken weeds;
 One 'gainst a hundred will he strive,
 Take countless wounds, and yet survive.
 Then rush the eagles to his cry
 Of slaughter and of victory,—
 And blood he quaffs like Odin's bowl,
 Deep drinks his sword,—deep drinks his soul;
 And all that meet him in his ire
 He gives to ruin, rout, and fire;
 Then, like gorged lion, seeks some den,
 And couches till he's man agen.—
 Thou know'st the signs of look and limb,
 When 'gins that rage to overbrim—
 Thou know'st when I am moved, and why;
 And when thou see'st me roll mine eye,
 Set my teeth thus, and stamp my foot,
 Regard thy safety and be mute;
 But else speak boldly out whate'er
 Is fitting that a knight should hear.
 I love thee, youth. Thy lay has power
 Upon my dark and sullen hour;—
 So Christian monks are wont to say
 Demons of old were charm'd away;
 Then fear not I will rashly deem
 Ill of thy speech, whate'er the theme."

- ix. As down some strait in doubt and dread
The watchful pilot drops the lead,
And, cautious in the midst to steer,
The shoaling channel sounds with fear;
So, lest on dangerous ground he swerved,
The Page his master's brow observed,
Pausing at intervals to fling
His hand o'er the melodious string,
And to his moody breast apply
The soothing charm of harmony,
While hinted half, and half express,
This warning song convey'd the rest.—

SONG

1. "Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
And ill when on the breakers driven,—
Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks in air,
And the scared mermaid tears her hair;
But worse when on her helm the hand
Of some false traitor holds command.
 2. Ill fares the fainting Palmer, placed
'Mid Hebron's rocks or Rana's waste,—
Ill when the scorching sun is high,
And the expected font is dry,—
Worse when his guide o'er sand and heath,
The barbarous Copt has plann'd his death.
 3. "Ill fares the Knight with buckler cleft,
And ill when of his helm bereft,—
Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
Or from his grasp his falchion wrung;
But worse, if instant ruin token,
When he lists rede by woman spoken."—
- x. "How now, fond boy?—Canst thou think ill,"
Said Harold, "of fair Metelill?"—
"She may be fair," the Page replied,
As through the strings he ranged,—
"She may be fair; but yet," he cried,
And then the strain he changed.—

SONG

1. "She may be fair," he sang, "but yet
Far fairer have I seen
Than she, for all her locks of jet,
And eyes so dark and sheen.

Were I a Danish knight in arms,
 As one day I may be,
 My heart should own no foreign charms,—
 A Danish maid for me.

2. "I love my fathers' northern land,
 Where the dark pine-trees grow,
 And the bold Baltic's echoing strand
 Looks o'er each grassy oe.¹
 I love to mark the lingering sun,
 From Denmark loth to go,
 And leaving on the billows bright,
 To cheer the short-lived summer night,
 A path of ruddy glow.

3. "But most the northern maid I love,
 With breast like Denmark's snow,
 And form as fair as Denmark's pine,
 Who loves with purple heath to twine
 Her locks of sunny glow;
 And sweetly blend that shade of gold
 With the cheek's rosy hue,
 And Faith might for her mirror hold
 That eye of matchless blue.

4. "'Tis hers the manly sports to love
 That southern maidens fear,
 To bend the bow by stream and grove,
 And lift the hunter's spear.
 She can her chosen champion's flight
 With eye undazzled see,
 Clasp him victorious from the strife,
 Or on his corpse yield up her life,—
 A Danish maid for me!"

- xI. Then smiled the Dane—"Thou canst so well
 The virtues of our maidens tell,
 Half could I wish my choice had been
 Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
 And lofty soul;—yet what of ill
 Hast thou to charge on Metelill?"—
 "Nothing on her," young Gunnar said,
 "But her base sire's ignoble trade.
 Her mother, too—the general fame
 Hath given to Jutta evil name,
 And in her grey eye is a flame
 Art cannot hide, nor fear can tame.—
 That sordid woodman's peasant cot

¹ Oe—Island.

Twice have thine honour'd footsteps sought,
And twice return'd with such ill rede
As sent thee on some desperate deed."—

- xii. "Thou errest; Jutta wisely said,
He that comes suitor to a maid,
Ere link'd in marriage, should provide
Lands and a dwelling for his bride—
My father's, by the Tyne and Wear,
I have reclaim'd."—"O, all too dear,
And all too dangerous the prize,
E'en were it won," young Gunnar cries;—
"And then this Jutta's fresh device,
That thou shouldst seek, a heathen Dane,
From Durham's priests a boon to gain,
When thou hast left their vassals slain
In their own halls!"—Flash'd Harold's eye,
Thunder'd his voice—"False Page, you lie!
The castle, hall and tower, is mine,
Built by old Witikind on Tyne.
The wild-cat will defend his den,
Fights for her nest the timid wren;
And think'st thou I'll forego my right
For dread of monk or monkish knight?—
Up and away, that deepening bell
Doth of the Bishop's conclave tell.
Thither will I, in manner due,
As Jutta bade, my claim to sue;
And, if to right me they are loth,
Then woe to church and chapter both!"
Now shift the scene, and let the curtain fall,
And our next entry be Saint Cuthbert's hall.

CANTO FOURTH

- i. Full many a bard hath sung the solemn gloom
Of the long Gothic aisle and stone-ribb'd roof,
O'er-canopying shrine, and gorgeous tomb,
Carved screen, and altar glimmering far aloof,
And blending with the shade—a matchless proof
Of high devotion, which hath now wax'd cold;
Yet legends say, that Luxury's brute hoof
Intruded oft within such sacred fold,
Like step of Bel's false priest, track'd in his fane of old.

Well pleased am I, howe'er, that when the route
Of our rude neighbours whilome deign'd to come,

Uncall'd, and eke unwelcome, to sweep out
 And cleanse our chancel from the rags of Rome,
 They spoke not on our ancient fane the doom
 To which their bigot zeal gave o'er their own,
 But spared the martyr'd saint and storied tomb,
 Though papal miracles had graced the stone,
 And though the aisles still loved the organ's swelling tone.

And deem not, though 'tis now my part to paint
 A Prelate sway'd by love of power and gold,
 That all who wore the mitre of our Saint
 Like to ambitious Aldingar I hold;
 Since both in modern times and days of old
 It sate on those whose virtues might atone
 Their predecessors' frailties trebly told:
 Matthew and Morton we as such may own—
 And such (if fame speak truth) the honour'd Barrington.

II. But now to earlier and to ruder times,
 As subject meet, I tune my rugged rhymes,
 Telling how fairly the chapter was met,
 And rood and books in seemly order set;
 Huge brass-clasp'd volumes, which the hand
 Of studious priest but rarely scann'd,
 Now on fair carved desk display'd,
 'Twas theirs the solemn scene to aid.
 O'erhead with many a scutcheon graced,
 And quaint devices interlaced,
 A labyrinth of crossing rows,
 The roof in lessening arches shows;
 Beneath its shade placed proud and high,
 With footstool and with canopy,
 Sate Aldingar,—and prelate ne'er
 More haughty graced Saint Cuthbert's chair;
 Canons and deacons were placed below,
 In due degree and lengthen'd row.
 Unmoved and silent each sat there,
 Like image in his oaken chair;
 Nor head, nor hand, nor foot they stirr'd,
 Nor lock of hair, nor tress of beard;
 And of their eyes severe alone
 The twinkle show'd they were not stone.

III. The Prelate was to speech address'd,
 Each head sunk reverent on each breast;
 But ere his voice was heard—without
 Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
 Offspring of wonder mix'd with fear,
 Such as in crowded streets we hear

Hailing the flames, that, bursting out,
Attract yet scare the rabble rout.
Ere it had ceased, a giant hand
Shook oaken door and iron band,
Till oak and iron both gave way,
Clash'd the long bolts, the hinges bray,
And, ere upon angel or saint they can call,
Stands Harold the Dauntless in midst of the hall.

- v. "Now save ye, my masters, both rocket and rood,
From Bishop with mitre to Deacon with hood!
For here stands Count Harold, old Witikind's son,
Come to sue for the lands which his ancestors won."
The Prelate look'd round him with sore troubled eye,
Unwilling to grant, yet afraid to deny;
While each Canon and Deacon who heard the Dane
speak,
To be safely at home would have fasted a week:—
Then Aldingar roused him, and answer'd again,
"Thou suest for a boon which thou canst not obtain;
The Church hath no fiefs for an unchristen'd Dane.
Thy father was wise, and his treasure hath given,
That the priests of a chantry might hymn him to
heaven;
And the fiefs which whilome he possess'd as his due,
Have lapsed to the Church, and been granted anew
To Anthony Conyers and Alberic Vere,
For the service Saint Cuthbert's bless'd banner to bear,
When the bands of the North come to foray the Wear;
Then disturb not our conclave with wrangling or blame,
But in peace and in patience pass hence as ye came."
- v. Loud laugh'd the stern Pagan,—“They're free from
the care
Of fief and of service, both Conyers and Vere,—
Six feet of your chancel is all they will need,
A buckler of stone and a corslet of lead.—
Ho, Gunnar!—the tokens;”—and, sever'd anew,
A head and a hand on the altar he threw.
Then shudder'd with terror both Canon and Monk,
They knew the glazed eye and the countenanceshrunk,
And of Anthony Conyers the half-grizzled hair,
And the scar on the hand of Sir Alberic Vere.
There was not a churchman or priest that was there,
But grew pale at the sight, and betook him to prayer.
- vi. Count Harold laugh'd at their looks of fear:
“Was this the hand should your banner bear?
Was that the head should wear the casque

In battle at the Church's task?
 Was it to such you gave the place
 Of Harold with the heavy mace?
 Find me between the Wear and Tyne
 A knight will wield this club of mine;—
 Give him my fiefs, and I will say
 There's wit beneath the cowl of grey."
 He raised it, rough with many a stain,
 Caught from crush'd skull and spouting brain;
 He wheel'd it that it shrilly sung,
 And the aisles echo'd as it swung,
 Then dash'd it down with sheer descent,
 And split King Osric's monument.—
 "How like ye this music? How trow ye the hand
 That can wield such a mace may be reft of its land?
 No answer?—I spare ye a space to agree,
 And Saint Cuthbert inspire you, a saint if he be.
 Ten strides through your chancel, ten strokes on your
 bell,
 And again I am with you—grave fathers, farewell."

VII. He turn'd from their presence, he clash'd the oak door,
 And the clang of his stride died away on the floor;
 And his head from his bosom the Prelate uprears
 With a ghost-seer's look when the ghost disappears.
 "Ye Priests of Saint Cuthbert, now give me your rede,
 For never of counsel had Bishop more need!
 Were the arch-fiend incarnate in flesh and in bone,
 The language, the look, and the laugh were his own.
 In the bounds of Saint Cuthbert there is not a knight
 Dare confront in our quarrel yon goblin in fight;
 Then rede me aright to his claim to reply,
 'Tis unlawful to grant, and 'tis death to deny."

VIII. On ven'son and malmsie that morning had fed
 The Cellarer Vinsauf—'twas thus that he said:
 "Delay till to-morrow the Chapter's reply;
 Let the feast be spread fair, and the wine be pour'd
 high:
 If he's mortal he drinks,—if he drinks, he is ours—
 His bracelets of iron,—his bed in our towers."
 This man had a laughing eye,
 Trust not, friends, when such you spy;
 A beaker's depth he well could drain,
 Revel, sport, and jest amain—
 The haunch of the deer and the grape's bright dye
 Never bard loved them better than I;
 But sooner than Vinsauf fill'd me my wine,
 Pass'd me his jest, and laugh'd at mine,

Though the buck were of Bearpark, of Bourdeaux the
vine,
With the dullest hermit I'd rather dine
On an oaten cake and a draught of the Tyne.

- ix. Walwayn the leech spoke next—he knew
Each plant that loves the sun and dew,
But special those whose juice can gain
Dominion o'er the blood and brain;
The peasant who saw him by pale moonbeam
Gathering such herbs by bank and stream,
Deem'd his thin form and soundless tread
Were those of wanderer from the dead.—
“Vinsauf, thy wine,” he said, “hath power,
Our gyves are heavy, strong our tower;
Yet three drops from this flask of mine,
More strong than dungeons, gyves, or wine,
Shall give him prison under ground
More dark, more narrow, more profound.
Short rede, good rede, let Harold have—
A dog's death and a heathen's grave.”
I have lain on a sick man's bed,
Watching for hours for the leech's tread,
As if I deem'd that his presence alone
Were of power to bid my pain begone;
I have listed his words of comfort given,
As if to oracles from heaven;
I have counted his steps from my chamber door,
And bless'd them when they were heard no more;—
But sooner than Walwayn my sick couch should nigh,
My choice were, by leech-craft unaided, to die.
- x. “Such service done in fervent zeal
The Church may pardon and conceal,”
The doubtful Prelate said, “but ne'er
The counsel ere the act should hear.—
Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
The stamp of wisdom is on thy brow;
Thy days, thy nights, in cloister pent,
Are still to mystic learning lent;—
Anselm of Jarrow, in thee is my hope,
Thou well mayst give counsel to Prelate or Pope.”
- xi. Answer'd the Prior—“'Tis wisdom's use
Still to delay what we dare not refuse;
Ere granting the boon he comes hither to ask,
Shape for the giant gigantic task;
Let us see how a step so sounding can tread
In paths of darkness, danger, and dread;

He may not, he will not, impugn our decree,
That calls but for proof of his chivalry;
And were Guy to return, or Sir Bevis the Strong,
Our wilds have adventure might cumber them long—
The Castle of Seven Shields"—"Kind Anselm, no
more!

The step of the Pagan approaches the door."
The churchmen were hush'd.—In his mantle of skin,
With his mace on his shoulder, Count Harold strode in.
There was foam on his lips, there was fire in his eye,
For, chafed by attendance, his fury was nigh.

"Ho! Bishop," he said, "dost thou grant me my
claim?

Or must I assert it by falchion and flame?"—

- xii. "On thy suit, gallant Harold," the Bishop replied,
In accents which trembled, "we may not decide,
Until proof of your strength and your valour we saw—
'Tis not that we doubt them, but such is the law."—
"And would you, Sir Prelate, have Harold make sport
For the cowls and the shavelings that herd in thy
court?

Say what shall he do?—From the shrine shall he tear
The lead bier of thy patron, and heave it in air,
And through the long chancel make Cuthbert take
wing,

With the speed of a bullet dismiss'd from the sling?"—

"Nay, spare such probation," the Cellarer said,
"From the mouth of our minstrels thy task shall be
read.

While the wine sparkles high in the goblet of gold,
And the revel is loudest, thy task shall be told;
And thyself, gallant Harold, shall, hearing it, tell
That the Bishop, his cowls, and his shavelings, meant
well."

- xiii. Loud revell'd the guests, and the goblets loud rang,
But louder the minstrel, Hugh Meneville, sang;
And Harold, the hurry and pride of whose soul,
E'en when verging to fury, own'd music's control,
Still bent on the harper his broad sable eye,
And often untasted the goblet pass'd by;
Than wine, or than wassail, to him was more dear
The minstrel's high tale of enchantment to hear;
And the Bishop that day might of Vinsauf complain
That his art had but wasted his wine-casks in vain.

THE CASTLE OF THE SEVEN SHIELDS

A Ballad

- xiv. The Druid Urien had daughters seven,
Their skill could call the moon from heaven;
So fair their forms and so high their fame,
That seven proud kings for their suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from Powis and Wales,
Unshorn was their hair, and unpruned were their nails;
From Strath-Clwyde was Ewain, and Ewain was lame,
And the red-bearded Donald from Galloway came.

Lot, King of Lodon, was hunchback'd from youth;
Dunmail of Cumbria had never a tooth;
But Adolf of Bambrough, Northumberland's heir,
Was gay and was gallant, was young and was fair.

There was strife 'mongst the sisters, for each one would
have
For husband King Adolf, the gallant and brave;
And envy bred hate, and hate urged them to blows,
When the firm earth was cleft, and the Arch-fiend
arose!

He swore to the maidens their wish to fulfil—
They swore to the foe they would work by his will.
A spindle and distaff to each hath he given,
“Now hearken my spell,” said the Outcast of heaven.

“Ye shall ply these spindles at midnight hour,
And for every spindle shall rise a tower,
Where the right shall be feeble, the wrong shall have
power,
And there shall ye dwell with your paramour.”

Beneath the pale moonlight they sate on the wold,
And the rhymes which they chanted must never be
told;
And as the black wool from the distaff they sped,
With blood from their bosom they moisten'd the
thread.

As light danced the spindles beneath the cold gleam,
The castle arose like the birth of a dream—
The seven towers ascended like mist from the ground,
Seven portals defend them, seven ditches surround.

Within that dread castle seven monarchs were wed,
 But six of the seven ere the morning lay dead;
 With their eyes all on fire, and their daggers all red,
 Seven damsels surround the Northumbrian's bed.

"Six kingly bridegrooms to death we have done,
 Six gallant kingdoms King Adolf hath won,
 Six lovely brides all his pleasure to do,
 Or the bed of the seventh shall be husbandless too."

Well chanced it that Adolf the night when he wed
 Had confess'd and had sain'd him ere boune to his bed;
 He sprung from the couch and his broadsword he
 drew,
 And there the seven daughters of Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted and seal'd,
 And hung o'er each arch-stone a crown and a shield;
 To the cells of Saint Dunstan then wended his way,
 And died in his cloister an anchorite grey.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that castle lies stow'd,
 The foul fiends brood o'er them like raven and toad.
 Whoever shall guesten these chambers within,
 From curfew till matins, that treasure shall win.

But manhood grows faint as the world waxes old!
 There lives not in Britain a champion so bold,
 So dauntless of heart, and so prudent of brain,
 As to dare the adventure that treasure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall wave with the rye,
 Before the rude Scots shall Northumberland fly,
 And the flint cliffs of Bambro' shall melt in the sun,
 Before that adventure be peril'd and won.

- xv. "And is this my probation?" wild Harold he said,
 "Within a lone castle to press a lone bed?—
 Good even, my Lord Bishop,—Saint Cuthbert to
 borrow,
 The Castle of Seven Shields receives me to-morrow."

CANTO FIFTH

- i. Denmark's sage courtier to her princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ouzel or a whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a partial truth;
For Fantasy embroiders Nature's veil.
The tints of ruddy eve, or dawning pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud, or silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the rich detail
Which Fantasy with pencil wild portrays,
Blending what seems and is, in the wrapt muser's gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of earth and stone
Less to the Sorceress's empire given;
For not with unsubstantial hues alone,
Caught from the varying surge, or vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam, or from flashing levin,
She limns her pictures: on the earth, as air,
Arise her castles, and her car is driven;
And never gazed the eye on scene so fair,
But of its boasted charms gave Fancy half the share.

- ii. Up a wild pass went Harold, bent to prove,
Hugh Meneville, the adventure of thy lay;
Gunnar pursued his steps in faith and love,
Ever companion of his master's way.
Midward their path, a rock of granite grey
From the adjoining cliff had made descent,—
A barren mass—yet with her drooping spray
Had a young birch-tree crown'd its battlement,
Twisting her fibrous roots through cranny, flaw, and
rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's thought engage
Till fancy brought the tear-drop to his eye,
And at his master ask'd the timid Page,
“What is the emblem that a bard should spy
In that rude rock and its green canopy?”
And Harold said, “Like to the helmet brave
Of warrior slain in fight it seems to lie,
And these same drooping boughs do o'er it wave
Not all unlike the plume his lady's favour gave.”—

“Ah, no!” replied the Page; “the ill-starr'd love
Of some poor maid is in the emblem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's interwove,
And rooted on a heart to love unknown:

And as the gentle dews of heaven alone
 Nourish those drooping boughs, and as the scathe
 Of the red lightning rends both tree and stone,
 So fares it with her unrequited faith,—
 Her sole relief is tears—her only refuge death.”—

- III. “Thou art a fond fantastic boy,”
 Harold replied, “to females coy,
 Yet prating still of love;
 Even so amid the clash of war
 I know thou lovest to keep afar,
 Though destined by thy evil star
 With one like me to rove,
 Whose business and whose joys are found
 Upon the bloody battle-ground.
 Yet, foolish trembler as thou art,
 Thou hast a nook of my rude heart,
 And thou and I will never part;—
 Harold would wrap the world in flame
 Ere injury on Gunnar came!”
- IV. The grateful Page made no reply,
 But turn'd to Heaven his gentle eye,
 And clasp'd his hands, as one who said,
 “My toils—my wanderings are o'erpaid!”
 Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
 Compell'd himself to speech again;
 And, as they flow'd along,
 His words took cadence soft and slow,
 And liquid, like dissolving snow,
 They melted into song.
- V. “What though through fields of carnage wide
 I may not follow Harold's stride,
 Yet who with faithful Gunnar's pride
 Lord Harold's feats can see?
 And dearer than the couch of pride,
 He loves the bed of grey wolf's hide,
 When slumbering by Lord Harold's side
 In forest, field, or lea.”—
- VI. “Break off!” said Harold, in a tone
 Where hurry and surprise were shown,
 With some slight touch of fear,—
 “Break off, we are not here alone;
 A Palmer form comes slowly on!
 By cowl, and staff, and mantle known,
 My monitor is near.
 Now mark him, Gunnar, heedfully;

He pauses by the blighted tree—
Dost see him, youth?—Thou couldst not see
When in the vale of Galilee

I first beheld his form,
Nor when we met that other while
In Cephalonia's rocky isle,

Before the fearful storm,—
Dost see him now?—The Page, distraught
With terror, answer'd, "I see nought,

And there is nought to see,
Save that the oak's scathed boughs fling down
Upon the path a shadow brown,
That, like a pilgrim's dusky gown,
Waves with the waving tree."

VII. Count Harold gazed upon the oak
As if his eyestrings would have broke,
And then resolvedly said,—

"Be what it will yon phantom grey—
Nor heaven, nor hell, shall ever say
That for their shadows from his way

Count Harold turn'd dismay'd:
I'll speak him, though his accents fill
My heart with that unwonted thrill

Which vulgar minds call fear.
I will subdue it!"—Forth he strode,
Paused where the blighted oak-tree show'd
Its sable shadow on the road,

And, folding on his bosom broad
His arms, said, "Speak—I hear."

VIII. The Deep Voice said, "O wild of will,
Furious thy purpose to fulfil—
Heart-sear'd and unrepentant still,
How long, O Harold, shall thy tread
Disturb the slumbers of the dead?
Each step in thy wild way thou makest,
The ashes of the dead thou wakest;
And shout in triumph o'er thy path
The fiends of bloodshed and of wrath.
In this thine hour, yet turn and hear!
For life is brief and judgment near."

IX. Then ceased the Voice.—The Dane replied
In tones where awe and inborn pride
For mastery strove,—“In vain ye chide
The wolf for ravaging the flock,
Or with its hardness taunt the rock,—
I am as they—my Danish strain

Sends streams of fire through every vein.
 Amid thy realms of ghouls and ghost,
 Say, is the fame of Eric lost,
 Or Witikind's the Waster, known
 Where fame or spoil was to be won;
 Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore

They left not black with flame?—

He was my sire,—and, sprung of him,
 That rover merciless and grim,

Can I be soft and tame?

Part hence, and with my crimes no more upbraid me,
 I am that Waster's son, and am but what he made me."

- x. The Phantom groan'd;—the mountain shook around,
 The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,
 The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,
 As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.

"All thou hast said is truth—Yet on the head
 Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid;

That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace,
 From grave to cradle ran the evil race:—

Relentless in his avarice and ire,

Churches and towns he gave to sword and fire;
 Shed blood like water, wasted every land,

Like the destroying angel's burning brand;

Fulfill'd whate'er of ill might be invented;

Yes—all these things he did—he did, but he

REPENTED!

Perchance it is part of his punishment still,

That his offspring pursues his example of ill.

But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next
 shake thee,

Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee;

If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,

The gate of repentance shall ope for thee NEVER!"—

- xi. "He is gone," said Lord Harold, and gazed as he
 spoke;

"There is nought on the path but the shade of the
 oak.

He is gone, whose strange presence my feeling
 oppress'd,

Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.

My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,

And cold dews drop from my brow and my head.—

Ho! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave;

He said that three drops would recall from the grave.

For the first time Count Harold owns leech-craft has
 power,

Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower! "
The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had fill'd
With the juice of wild roots that his art had dis-
till'd—

So baneful their influence on all that had breath,
One drop had been frenzy, and two had been death.
Harold took it, but drank not; for jubilee shrill,
And music and clamour were heard on the hill,
And down the steep pathway, o'er stock and o'er
stone,

The train of a bridal came blithesomely on;
There was song, there was pipe, there was timbrel,
and still

The burden was, " Joy to the fair Metelill! "

- XII. Harold might see from his high stance,
Himself unseen, that train advance
With mirth and melody;—
On horse and foot a mingled throng,
Measuring their steps to bridal song
And bridal minstrelsy;
And ever when the blithsome rout
Lent to the song their choral shout,
Redoubling echoes roll'd about,
While echoing cave and cliff sent out
The answering symphony
Of all those mimic notes which dwell
In hollow rock and sounding dell.

- XIII. Joy shook his torch above the band,
By many a various passion fann'd;—
As elemental sparks can feed
On essence pure and coarsest weed,
Gentle, or stormy, or refined,
Joy takes the colours of the mind.
Lightsome and pure, but unrepres'd,
He fired the bridegroom's gallant breast;
More feebly strove with maiden fear,
Yet still joy glimmer'd through the tear
On the bride's blushing cheek, that shows
Like dewdrop on the budding rose;
While Wulfstane's gloomy smile declared
The glee that selfish avarice shared;
And pleased revenge and malice high
Joy's semblance took in Jutta's eye.
On dangerous adventure sped,
The witch deem'd Harold with the dead,
For thus that morn her Demon said:—
" If, ere the set of sun, be tied

The knot 'twixt bridegroom and his bride,
 The Dane shall have no power of ill
 O'er William and o'er Metelill."
 And the pleased witch made answer, " Then
 Must Harold have pass'd from the paths of men !
 Evil repose may his spirit have,—
 May hemlock and mandrake find root in his grave,—
 May his death-sleep be dogged by dreams of dismay,
 And his waking be worse at the answering day."

- xiv. Such was their various mood of glee
 Blent in one shout of ecstasy.
 But still when Joy is brimming highest,
 Of Sorrow and Misfortune nighest,
 Of terror with her ague cheek,
 And lurking Danger, sages speak:—
 These haunt each path, but chief they lay
 Their snares beside the primrose way.—
 Thus found that bridal band their path
 Beset by Harold in his wrath.
 Trembling beneath his maddening mood,
 High on a rock the giant stood ;
 His shout was like the doom of death
 Spoke o'er their heads that pass'd beneath.
 His destined victims might not spy
 The reddening terrors of his eye,—
 The frown of rage that writhed his face,—
 The lip that foam'd like boar's in chase;—
 But all could see—and, seeing, all
 Bore back to shun the threaten'd fall—
 The fragment which their giant foe
 Rent from the cliff and heaved to throw.

- xv. Backward they bore;—yet are there two
 For battle who prepare:
 No pause of dread Lord William knew
 Ere his good blade was bare;
 And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
 But ere the silken cord he drew,
 As hurl'd from Hecla's thunder, flew
 That ruin through the air!
 Full on the outlaw's front it came,
 And all that late had human name,
 And human face, and human frame,
 That lived, and moved, and had free will
 To choose the path of good or ill,
 Is to its reckoning gone;
 And nought of Wulfstane rests behind,
 Save that beneath that stone,

Half-buried in the dinted clay,
A red and shapeless mass there lay
Of mingled flesh and bone!

xvi. As from the bosom of the sky
The eagle darts amain,
Three bounds from yonder summit high
Placed Harold on the plain.
As the scared wild-fowl scream and fly,
So fled the bridal train;
As 'gainst the eagle's peerless might
The noble falcon dares the fight,
But dares the fight in vain,
So fought the bridegroom; from his hand
The Dane's rude mace has struck his brand,
Its glittering fragments strew the sand,
Its lord lies on the plain.
Now, Heaven! take noble William's part,
And melt that yet unmelted heart,
Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom's slain!

xvii. Count Harold's frenzied rage is high,
There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are trench'd,
His teeth are set, his hand is clench'd,
The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite!
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar sprung,
Around his master's knees he clung,
And cried, "In mercy spare!
O, think upon the words of fear;
Spoke by that visionary Seer,
The crisis he foretold is here,—
Grant mercy,—or despair!"
This word suspended Harold's mood,
Yet still with arm upraised he stood,
And visage like the headsman's rude
That pauses for the sign.
"O mark thee with the blessed rood,"
The Page implored; "Speak word of good,
Resist the fiend, or be subdued!"
He sign'd the cross divine—
Instant his eye hath human light,
Less red, less keen, less fiercely bright;
His brow relax'd the obdurate frown,
The fatal mace sinks gently down,
He turns and strides away;

Yet oft, like revellers who leave
Unfinish'd feast, looks back to grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve
He granted to his prey.

Yet still of forbearance one sign hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made one step towards
heaven.

xviii. But though his dreaded footsteps part,
Death is behind and shakes his dart;
Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dying!—
Bring odours—essences in haste—
And lo! a flasket richly chased,—
But Jutta the elixir proves
Ere pouring it for those she loves—
Then Walwayn's potion was not wasted,
For when three drops the hag had tasted,
So dismal was her yell,
Each bird of evil omen woke,
The raven gave his fatal croak,
And shriek'd the night-crow from the oak,
The screech-owl from the thicket broke,
And flutter'd down the dell!
So fearful was the sound and stern,
The slumbers of the full-gorged erne
Were startled, and from furze and fern
Of forest and of fell,
The fox and famish'd wolf replied,
(For wolves then prowld the Cheviot side.)
From mountain head to mountain head
The unhallow'd sounds around were sped;
But when their latest echo fled,
The sorceress on the ground lay dead.

xix. Such was the scene of blood and woes,
With which the bridal morn arose
Of William and of Metelill;
But oft, when dawning 'gins to spread,
The summer morn peeps dim and red
Above the eastern hill,
Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
The King of Splendour walks abroad;
So, when this cloud had pass'd away,
Bright was the noontide of their day
And all serene its setting ray.

CANTO SIXTH

- i. Well do I hope that this my minstrel tale
Will tempt no traveller from southern fields,
Whether in tilbury, barouche, or mail,
To view the Castle of these Seven Proud Shields.
Small confirmation its condition yields
To Meneville's high lay.—No towers are seen,
On the wild heath, but those that Fancy builds,
And, save a fosse that tracks the moor with green,
Is nought remains to tell of what may there have been.

And yet grave authors, with the no small waste
Of their grave time, have dignified the spot
By theories, to prove the fortress placed
By Roman bands, to curb the invading Scot.
Hutchinson, Horsley, Camden, I might quote,
But rather choose the theory less civil
Of boors, who, origin of things forgot,
Refer still to the origin of evil,
And for their master-mason choose that master-fiend
the Devil.

- ii. Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-built towers
That stout Count Harold bent his wondering gaze,
When evening dew was on the heather flowers,
And the last sunbeams made the mountain blaze,
And tinged the battlements of other days
With the bright level light ere sinking down.—
Illumined thus, the Dauntless Dane surveys
The Seven Proud Shields that o'er the portal frown,
And on their blazons traced high marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his armour-coat,
And Rhys of Powis-land a couchant stag;
Strath-Clwyd's strange emblem was a stranded boat,
Donald of Galloway's a trotting nag;
A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile Lodon's brag;
A dudgeon-dagger was by Dunmail worn;
Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-beat crag
Surmounted by a cross—such signs were borne
Upon these antique shields, all wasted now and worn.

- iii. These scann'd, Count Harold sought the castle-door,
Whose ponderous bolts were rusted to decay;
Yet till that hour adventurous knight forbode
The unobstructed passage to essay.

More strong than armed warders in array,
 And obstacle more sure than bolt or bar,
 Sate in the portal Terror and Dismay,
 While Superstition, who forbade to war
 With foes of other mould than mortal clay,
 Cast spells across the gate, and barr'd the onward way.

Vain now those spells; for soon with heavy clank
 The feebly-fasten'd gate was inward push'd,
 And, as it oped, through that emblazon'd rank
 Of antique shields, the wind of evening rush'd
 With sound most like a groan, and then was hush'd.
 Is none who on such spot such sounds could hear
 But to his heart the blood had faster rush'd;
 Yet to bold Harold's breast that throb was dear—
 It spoke of danger nigh, but had no touch of fear.

- iv. Yet Harold and his Page no signs have traced
 Within the castle, that of danger show'd;
 For still the halls and courts were wild and waste,
 As through their precincts the adventurers trode.
 The seven huge towers rose stately, tall, and broad,
 Each tower presenting to their scrutiny
 A hall in which a king might make abode,
 And fast beside, garnish'd both proud and high,
 Was placed a bower for rest in which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had been,
 Deck'd stood the table in each gorgeous hall;
 And yet it was two hundred years, I ween,
 Since date of that unhallow'd festival.
 Flagons, and ewers, and standing cups, were all
 Of tarnish'd gold, or silver nothing clear,
 With throne begilt, and canopy of pall,
 And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments sear—
 Frail as the spider's mesh did that rich woof appear.

- v. In every bower, as round a hearse, was hung
 A dusky crimson curtain o'er the bed,
 And on each couch in ghastly wise were flung
 The wasted relics of a monarch dead;
 Barbaric ornaments around were spread,
 Vests twined with gold, and chains of precious stone,
 And golden circlets, meet for monarch's head;
 While grinn'd, as if in scorn amongst them thrown,
 The wearer's fleshless skull, alike with dust bestrown.

For these were they who, drunken with delight,
 On pleasure's opiate pillow laid their head,

For whom the bride's shy footstep, slow and light,
Was changed ere morning to the murderer's tread.
For human bliss and woe in the frail thread
Of human life are all so closely twined,
That till the shears of Fate the texture shred,
The close succession cannot be disjoin'd,
Nor dare we, from one hour, judge that which comes
behind.

- VI. But where the work of vengeance had been done,
In that seventh chamber, was a sterner sight;
There of the witch-brides lay each skeleton,
Still in the posture as to death when dight.
For this lay prone, by one blow slain outright;
And that, as one who struggled long in dying;
One bony hand held knife, as if to smite;
One bent on fleshless knees, as mercy crying;
One lay across the door, as kill'd in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this charnel-house to see,—
For his chafed thought return'd to Metelill;—
And "Well," he said, "hath woman's perfidy,
Empty as air, as water volatile,
Been here avenged—The origin of ill
Through woman rose, the Christian doctrine saith:
Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy minstrel skill
Can show example where a woman's breath
Hath made a true-love vow, and, tempted, kept her
faith."

- VII. The minstrel-boy half smiled, half sigh'd,
And his half-filling eyes he dried,
And said, "The theme I should but wrong,
Unless it were my dying song,
(Our Scalds have said, in dying hour
The Northern harp has treble power,)
Else could I tell of woman's faith,
Defying danger, scorn, and death.
Firm was that faith,—as diamond stone
Pure and unflaw'd,—her love unknown,
And unrequited;—firm and pure,
Her stainless faith could all endure;
From clime to clime,—from place to place,—
Through want, and danger, and disgrace,
A wanderer's wayward steps could trace.—
All this she did, and guerdon none
Required, save that her burial-stone
Should make at length the secret known,
'Thus hath a faithful woman done.'—

Not in each breast such truth is laid,
But Eivir was a Danish maid."—

- VIII. "Thou art a wild enthusiast," said
Count Harold, "for thy Danish maid;
And yet, young Gunnar, I will own
Hers were a faith to rest upon.
But Eivir sleeps beneath her stone,
And all resembling her are gone.
What maid e'er show'd such constancy
In plighted faith, like thine to me?
But couch thee, boy; the darksome shade
Falls thickly round, nor be dismay'd
Because the dead are by.
They were as we; our little day
O'erspent, and we shall be as they.
Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou laid,
Thy couch upon my mantle made,
That thou mayst think, should fear invade,
Thy master slumbers nigh."
Thus couch'd they in that dread abode,
Until the beams of dawning glow'd.

- IX. An alter'd man Lord Harold rose,
When he beheld that dawn uncloset—
There's trouble in his eyes,
And traces on his brow and cheek
Of mingled awe and wonder speak:
"My page," he said, "arise;—
Leave we this place, my page."—No more
He utter'd till the castle door
They cross'd—but there he paused and said,
"My wildness hath awaked the dead—
Disturb'd the sacred tomb!
Methought this night I stood on high,
Where Hecla roars in middle sky,
And in her cavern'd gulfs could spy
The central place of doom;
And there before my mortal eye
Souls of the dead came flitting by,
Whom fiends, with many a fiendish cry,
Bore to that evil den!
My eyes grew dizzy, and my brain
Was wilder'd, as the elvish train,
With shriek and howl, dragg'd on amain
Those who had late been men.

- X. "With haggard eyes and streaming hair,
Jutta the Sorceress was there,

And there pass'd Wulfstane, lately slain,
 All crush'd and foul with bloody stain.—
 More had I seen, but that uprose
 A whirlwind wild, and swept the snows;
 And with such sound as when at need
 A champion spurs his horse to speed,
 Three arm'd knights rush on, who lead
 Caparison'd a sable steed.

Sable their harness, and there came
 Through their closed visors sparks of flame.
 The first proclaim'd, in sounds of fear,
 'Harold the Dauntless, welcome here!'
 The next cried, 'Jubilee! we've won
 Count Witikind the Waster's son!'
 And the third rider sternly spoke,
 'Mount, in the name of Zerneck!—
 From us, O Harold, were thy powers,—
 Thy strength, thy dauntlessness, are ours;
 Nor think, a vassal thou of hell,
 With hell can strive.' The fiend spoke true.
 My inmost soul the summons knew,

As captives know the knell
 That says the headsman's sword is bare,
 And, with an accent of despair,

Commands them quit their cell.
 I felt resistance was in vain,
 My foot had that fell stirrup ta'en,
 My hand was on the fatal mane,

When to my rescue sped
 That Palmer's visionary form,
 And—like the passing of a storm—
 The demons yell'd and fled!

- xI. "His sable cowl, flung back, reveal'd
 The features it before conceal'd;
 And, Gunnar, I could find
 In him whose counsels strove to stay
 So oft my course on wilful way,
 My father Witikind!
 Doom'd for his sins, and doom'd for mine,
 A wanderer upon earth to pine
 Until his son shall turn to grace,
 And smooth for him a resting-place.—
 Gunnar, he must not haunt in vain
 This world of wretchedness and pain:
 I'll tame my wilful heart to live
 In peace—to pity and forgive—
 And thou, for so the Vision said,
 Must in thy Lord's repentance aid.

Thy mother was a prophetess,
 He said, who by her skill could guess
 How close the fatal textures join
 Which knit thy thread of life with mine;
 Then, dark, he hinted of disguise
 She framed to cheat too curious eyes,
 That not a moment might divide
 Thy fated footsteps from my side.
 Methought while thus my sire did teach,
 I caught the meaning of his speech,
 Yet seems its purport doubtful now."
 His hand then sought his thoughtful brow
 Then first he mark'd, that in the tower
 His glove was left at waking hour.

xii. Trembling at first, and deadly pale,
 Had Gunnar heard the vision'd tale;
 But when he learn'd the dubious close,
 He blush'd like any opening rose,
 And, glad to hide his tell-tale cheek,
 Hied back that glove of mail to seek;
 When soon a shriek of deadly dread
 Summon'd his master to his aid.

xiii. What sees Count Harold in that bower,
 So late his resting-place?—
 The semblance of the Evil Power,
 Adored by all his race!
 Odin in living form stood there,
 His cloak the spoils of Polar bear;
 For plummy crest a meteor shed
 Its gloomy radiance o'er his head,
 Yet veil'd its haggard majesty
 To the wild lightnings of his eye.
 Such height was his, as when in stone
 O'er Upsal's giant altar shown:
 So flow'd his hoary beard;
 Such was his lance of mountain-pine,
 So did his sevenfold buckler shine;—
 But when his voice he rear'd,
 Deep, without harshness, slow and strong,
 The powerful accents roll'd along,
 And, while he spoke, his hand was laid
 On captive Gunnar's shrinking head.

xiv. "Harold," he said, "what rage is thine,
 To quit the worship of thy line,
 To leave thy Warrior-God?—
 With me is glory or disgrace,

Mine is the onset and the chase,
Embattled hosts before my face
Are wither'd by a nod.
Wilt thou then forfeit that high seat
Deserved by many a dauntless feat,
Among the heroes of thy line,
Eric and fiery Thorarine?—
Thou wilt not. Only I can give
The joys for which the valiant live,
Victory and vengeance—only I
Can give the joys for which they die,
The immortal tilt—the banquet full,
The brimming draught from foeman's skull.
Mine art thou, witness this thy glove,
The faithful pledge of vassal's love.”—

- xv. “Tempter,” said Harold, firm of heart,
“I charge thee, hence! whate’er thou art,
I do defy thee—and resist
The kindling frenzy of my breast,
Waked by thy words; and of my mail,
Nor glove, nor buckler, splent, nor nail,
Shall rest with thee—that youth release,
And God, or Demon, part is peace.”—
“Eivir,” the Shape replied, “is mine,
Mark’d in the birth-hour with my sign.
Think’st thou that priest with drops of spray
Could wash that blood-red mark away?
Or that a borrow’d sex and name
Can abrogate a Godhead’s claim?”
Thrill’d this strange speech through Harold’s brain,
He clench’d his teeth in high disdain,
For not his new-born faith subdued
Some tokens of his ancient mood.—
“Now, by the hope so lately given
Of better trust and purer heaven,
I will assail thee, fiend!”—Then rose
His mace, and with a storm of blows
The mortal and the Demon close.

- xvi. Smoke roll’d above, fire flash’d around,
Darken’d the sky and shook the ground;
But not the artillery of hell,
The bickering lightning, nor the rock
Of turrets to the earthquake’s shock,
Could Harold’s courage quell.
Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
And blows on blows resistless heap’d,
Till quail’d that Demon Form,

And—for his power to hurt or kill
Was bounded by a higher will—
Evanish'd in the storm.

Nor paused the Champion of the North,
But raised, and bore his Eivir forth,
From that wild scene of fiendish strife,
To light, to liberty, and life!

- xvii. He placed her on a bank of moss,
A silver runnel bubbled by,
And new-born thoughts his soul engross,
And tremors yet unknown across
His stubborn sinews fly,
The while with timid hand the dew
Upon her brow and neck he threw,
And mark'd how life with rosy hue
On her pale cheek revived anew,
And glimmer'd in her eye.
Inly he said, "That silken tress,—
What blindness mine that could not guess!
Or how could page's rugged dress
That bosom's pride belie?
O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
In search of blood and death to rave,
With such a partner nigh!"

- xviii. Then in the mirror'd pool he peer'd,
Blamed his rough locks and shaggy beard,
The stains of recent conflict clear'd,—
And thus the Champion proved,
That he fears now who never fear'd,
And loves who never loved.
And Eivir—life is on her cheek,
And yet she will not move or speak,
Nor will her eyelid fully ope;
Perchance it loves, that half-shut eye,
Through its long fringe, reserved and shy,
Affection's opening dawn to spy;
And the deep blush, which bids its dye
O'er cheek, and brow, and bosom fly,
Speaks shame-facedness and hope.

- xix. But vainly seems the Dane to seek
For terms his new-born love to speak,—
For words, save those of wrath and wrong,
Till now were strangers to his tongue;
So, when he raised the blushing maid,
In blunt and honest terms he said,
'Twere well that maids, when lovers woo,

Heard none more soft, were all as true,)
"Eivir! since thou for many a day
Hast follow'd Harold's wayward way,
It is but meet that in the line
Of after-life I follow thine.
To-morrow is Saint Cuthbert's tide,
And we will grace his altar's side,
A Christian knight and Christian bride;
And of Witikind's son shall the marvel be said,
That on the same morn he was christen'd and wed."

CONCLUSION

And now, Ennui, what ails thee, weary maid?
And why these listless looks of yawning sorrow?
No need to turn the page, as if 'twere lead,
Or fling aside the volume till to-morrow.—
Be cheer'd—'tis ended—and I will not borrow,
To try thy patience more, one anecdote
From Bartholine, or Perinskiold, or Snorro.
Then pardon thou thy minstrel, who hath wrote
A Tale six cantos long, yet scorn'd to add a note.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO¹

- I. Fair Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hour
Peal'd over orchard and canal,
With voice prolong'd and measured fall,
From proud St. Michael's tower;
Thy wood, dark Soignies,² holds us now,
Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak between,
Spreads deep and far a pathless screen,
Of tangled forest ground.
Stems planted close by stems defy
The adventurous foot—the curious eye
For access seeks in vain;
And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strew'd on the blighted ground, receives
Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
No opening glade dawns on our way,
No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
Our woodland path has cross'd;
And the straight causeway which we tread,
Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
Unvarying through the unvaried shade
Until in distance lost.
- II. A brighter, livelier scene succeeds;
In groups the scattering wood recedes,
Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
And corn-fields, glance between;
The peasant, at his labour blithe,
Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe:—
But when these ears were green,
Placed close within destruction's scope,
Full little was that rustic's hope
Their ripening to have seen!

¹ Dedication: To her Grace the Duchess of Wellington, Princess of Waterloo, the following verses are most respectfully inscribed by the Author.

² "The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the forest of Ardennes, famous in Boiardo's *Orlando*, and immortal in Shakspeare's *As You Like It*. It is also celebrated in Tacitus as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroachments."

—BYRON.

And, lo, a hamlet and its fane:—
 Let not the gazer with disdain
 Their architecture view;
 For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
 And disproportion'd spire, are thine,
 Immortal WATERLOO!

- III. Fear not the heat, though full and high
 The sun has scorch'd the autumn sky,
 And scarce a forest straggler now
 To shade us spreads a greenwood bough;
 These fields have seen a hotter day
 Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
 Yet one mile on—yon shatter'd hedge
 Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge
 Looks on the field below,
 And sinks so gently on the dale,
 That not the folds of Beauty's veil
 In easier curves can flow.
 Brief space from thence, the ground again
 Ascending slowly from the plain,
 Forms an opposing screen,
 Which, with its crest of upland ground,
 Shuts the horizon all around.

 The soften'd vale between
 Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread;
 Not the most timid maid need dread
 To give her snow-white palfrey head
 On that wide stubble-ground;
 Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush, are there,
 Her course to intercept or scare,
 Nor fosse nor fence are found,
 Save where, from out her shatter'd bowers,
 Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

- IV. Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene
 Can tell of that which late hath been?—
 A stranger might reply,
 "The bare extent of stubble-plain
 Seems lately lighten'd of its grain;
 And yonder sable tracks remain
 Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,
 When harvest-home was nigh.
 On these broad spots of trampled ground,
 Perchance the rustics danced such round
 As Teniers loved to draw;
 And where the earth seems scorch'd by flame,
 To dress the homely feast they came,
 And toil'd the kerchief'd village dame
 Around her fire of straw."

- v. So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems,
Of that which is from that which seems:—
 But other harvest here,
Than that which peasant's scythe demands,
Was gather'd in by sterner hands,
 With bayonet, blade, and spear.
No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest thin and cheap!
Heroes before each fatal sweep
 Fell thick as ripen'd grain;
And ere the darkening of the day,
Piled high as autumn shocks, there lay
The ghastly harvest of the fray,
 The corpses of the slain.
- vi. Ay, look again—that line, so black
And trampled, marks the bivouac,
Yon deep-graved ruts the artillery's track,
 So often lost and won;
And close beside, the harden'd mud
Still shows where, fetlock-deep in blood,
The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,
 Dash'd the hot war-horse on.
These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell—
And feel'st thou not the tainted steam,
That reeks against the sultry beam,
 From yonder trenched mound?
The pestilential fumes declare
That Carnage has replenish'd there
 Her garner-house profound.
- vii. Far other harvest-home and feast,
Than claims the boor from scythe released,
 On these scorch'd fields were known!
Death hover'd o'er the maddening rout,
And, in the thrilling battle-shout,
Sent for the bloody banquet out
 A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy,
Well could his ear in ecstasy
 Distinguish every tone
That fill'd the chorus of the fray—
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadron's wild hurra,
From the wild clang that mark'd their way,—
 Down to the dying groan,
And the last sob of life's decay,
 When breath was all but flown.

- viii. Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
 Feast on!—but think not that a strife,
 With such promiscuous carnage rife,
 Protracted space may last;
 The deadly tug of war at length
 Must limits find in human strength,
 And cease when these are past.
 Vain hope!—that morn's o'erclouded sun
 Heard the wild shout of fight begun
 Ere he attain'd his height,
 And through the war-smoke, volumed high,
 Still peals that unremitted cry,
 Though now he stoops to night.
 For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
 Fresh succours from the extended head
 Of either hill the contest fed;
 Still down the slope they drew,
 The charge of columns paused not,
 Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot;
 For all that war could do
 Of skill and force was proved that day,
 And turn'd not yet the doubtful fray:
 On bloody Waterloo.
- ix. Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,
 When ceaseless from the distant line
 Continued thunders came!
 Each burgher held his breath, to hear
 These forerunners of havoc near,
 Of rapine and of flame.
 What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
 When rolling through thy stately street,
 The wounded show'd their mangled plight
 In token of the unfinish'd fight,
 And from each anguish-laden wain
 The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain!
 How often in the distant drum
 Heard'st thou the fell Invader come,
 While Ruin, shouting to his band,
 Shook high her torch and gory brand!—
 Cheer thee, fair City! From yon stand,
 Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
 Points to his prey in vain,
 While maddening in his eager mood,
 And all unwont to be withstood,
 He fires the fight again.
- x. "On! On!" was still his stern exclaim;
 "Confront the battery's jaws of flame!"

Rush on the levell'd gun!
 My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
 Each Hulan forward with his lance,
 My Guard—my Chosen—charge for France,
 France and Napoleon!"

Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,
 Greeting the mandate which sent out
 Their bravest and their best to dare
 The fate their leader shunn'd to share.
 But HE, his country's sword and shield,
 Still in the battle-front reveal'd,
 Where danger fiercest swept the field,
 Came like a beam of light,
 In action prompt, in sentence brief—
 "Soldiers, stand firm," exclaim'd the Chief,
 "England shall tell the fight!"

- XI. On came the whirlwind—like the last
 But fiercest sweep of tempest-blast—
 On came the whirlwind—steel-gleams broke
 Like lightning through the rolling smoke;
 The war was waked anew,
 Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
 And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
 Their showers of iron threw.
 Beneath their fire, in full career,
 Rush'd on the ponderous cuirassier,
 The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
 And hurrying as to havoc near,
 The cohorts' eagles flew.
 In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
 The advancing onset roll'd along,
 Forth harbinger'd by fierce acclaim,
 That, from the shroud of smoke and flame,
 Peal'd wildly the imperial name.
- XII. But on the British heart were lost
 The terrors of the charging host;
 For not an eye the storm that view'd
 Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
 Nor was one forward footstep staid,
 As dropp'd the dying and the dead.
 Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
 Fast they renew'd each serried square;
 And on the wounded and the slain
 Closed their diminish'd files again,
 Till from their line scarce spears' lengths three,
 Emerging from the smoke they see
 Helmet, and plume, and panoply,—

Then waked their fire at once!
Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,
As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day.

Then down went helm and lance,
Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent;

And, to augment the fray,
Wheel'd full against their staggering flanks,
The English horsemen's foaming ranks

Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds
The clash of swords—the neigh of steeds—
As plies the smith his clanging trade,
Against the cuirass rang the blade;
And while amid their close array
The well-served cannon rent their way,
And while amid their scatter'd band
Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
Recoil'd in common rout and fear,
Lancer and guard and cuirassier,
Horsemen and foot—a mingled host,
Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

XIII. Then, WELLINGTON! thy piercing eye
This crisis caught of destiny—

The British host had stood
That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance
As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
But when thy voice had said, "Advance!"

They were their ocean's flood.—
O Thou, whose inauspicious aim
Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,
Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
The terrors of yon rushing tide?
Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of levell'd steel,

Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,

And other standards fly?—
Think not that in yon columns, file
Thy conquering troops from Distant Dyle—

Is Blucher yet unknown?
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
(Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,)
What notes of hate and vengeance thrill

In Prussia's trumpet tone?—
 What yet remains?—shall it be thine
 To head the relics of thy line
 In one dread effort more?—
 The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
 And thou canst tell what fortune proved
 That Chieftain, who, of yore,
 Ambition's dizzy paths essay'd,
 And with the gladiators' aid
 For empire enterprised—
 He stood the cast his rashness play'd,
 Left not the victims he had made,
 Dug his red grave with his own blade
 And on the field he lost was laid,
 Abhorr'd—but not despised.

- xiv. But if revolves thy fainter thought
 On safety—howsoever bought,—
 Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
 Though twice ten thousand men have died
 On this eventful day;
 To gild the military fame
 Which thou, for life, in traffic tame
 Wilt barter thus away.
 Shall future ages tell this tale
 Of inconsistency faint and frail?
 And art thou He of Lodi's bridge,
 Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge!
 Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
 That, swell'd by winter storm and shower,
 Rolls down in turbulence of power;
 A torrent fierce and wide;
 Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
 Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
 Whose channel shows display'd
 The wrecks of its impetuous course,
 But not one symptom of the force
 By which these wrecks were made!
- xv. Spur on thy way!—since now thine ear
 Has brook'd thy veterans' wish to hear,
 Who, as thy flight they eyed,
 Exclaim'd,—while tears of anguish came,
 Wrung forth by pride, and rage, and shame,—
 “O, that he had but died!”
 But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
 Look, ere thou leavest the fatal hill,
 Back on yon broken ranks—
 Upon whose wild confusion gleams

The moon, as on the troubled streams
 When rivers break their banks,
 And, to the ruin'd peasant's eye,
 Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
 Down to the dread current hurl'd—
 So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
 Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
 Of warriors, who, when morn begun,
 Defied a banded world.

xvi. List—frequent to the hurrying rout,
 The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
 Tells, that upon their broken rear
 Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.
 So fell a shriek was none,
 When Beresina's icy flood
 Redden'd and thaw'd with flame and blood,
 And, pressing on thy desperate way,
 Raised oft and long their wild hurra,
 The children of the Don.

Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
 So ominous, when, all bereft
 Of aid, the valiant Polack left—
 Ay, left by thee—found soldier's grave
 In Leipsic's corpse-encumber'd wave.
 Fate, in those various perils past,
 Reserved thee still some future cast;
 On the dread die thou now hast thrown,
 Hangs not a single field alone,
 Nor one campaign—thy martial fame,
 Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
 Have felt the final stroke;
 And now, o'er thy devoted head
 The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
 The last dread seal is broke.

xvii. Since live thou wilt—refuse not now
 Before these demagogues to bow,
 Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
 Who shall thy once imperial fate
 Make wordy theme of vain debate.—
 Or shall we say, thou stoop'st less low
 In seeking refuge from the foe,
 Against whose heart, in prosperous life,
 Thine hand hath ever held the knife?
 Such homage hath been paid
 By Roman and by Grecian voice,

And there were honour in the choice,
If it were freely made.

Then safely come—in one so low,—
So lost,—we cannot own a foe;
Though dear experience bid us end,
In thee we ne'er can hail a friend.—
Come, howsoe'er—but do not hide
Close in thy heart that germ of pride,
Erewhile, by gifted bard espied,
That “yet imperial hope;”

Think not that for a fresh rebound,
To raise ambition from the ground,
We yield thee means or scope.

In safety come—but ne'er again
Hold type of independent reign;

No islet calls thee lord,
We leave thee no confederate band,
No symbol of thy lost command,
To be a dagger in the hand
From which we wrench'd the sword.

- XVIII. Yet, even in yon sequester'd spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot
Than yet thy life has known;
Conquest, unbought by blood or harm,
That needs nor foreign aid nor arm,
A triumph all thine own.
Such waits thee when thou shalt control
Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,
That marr'd thy prosperous scene:—
Hear this—from no unmoved heart,
Which sighs, comparing what THOU ART
With what thou MIGHT'ST HAVE BEEN!

- XIX. Thou, too, whose deeds of fame renew'd
Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
To thine own noble heart must owe
More than the meed she can bestow.
For not a people's just acclaim,
Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
Thy Prince's smiles, thy State's decree,
The ducal rank, the garter'd knee,
Not these such pure delight afford
As that, when hanging up thy sword,
Well may'st thou think, “This honest steel
Was ever drawn for public weal;
And, such was rightful Heaven's decree,
Ne'er sheathed unless with victory!”

xx. Look forth, once more, with soften'd heart,
 Ere from the field of fame we part;
 Triumph and Sorrow border near,
 And joy oft melts into a tear.
 Alas! what links of love that morn
 Has War's rude hand asunder torn!
 For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
 And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.
 Here piled in common slaughter sleep
 Those whom affection long shall weep:
 Here rests the sire, that ne'er shall strain
 His orphans to his heart again;
 The son, whom, on his native shore,
 The parent's voice shall bless no more;
 The bridegroom, who has hardly press'd
 His blushing consort to his breast;
 The husband, whom through many a year
 Long love and mutual faith endear.
 Thou canst not name one tender tie,
 But here dissolved its relics lie!
 O! when thou see'st some mourner's veil
 Shroud her thin form and visage pale,
 Or mark'st the Matron's bursting tears
 Stream when the stricken drum she hears;
 Or see'st how manlier grief, suppress'd,
 Is labouring in a father's breast,—
 With no enquiry vain pursue
 The cause, but think on Waterloo!

xxi. Period of honour as of woes,
 What bright careers 'twas thine to close!—
 Mark'd on thy roll of blood what names
 To Briton's memory, and to Fame's,
 Laid there their last immortal claims!
 Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
 Redoubted PICTON's soul of fire—
 Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
 All that of PONSONBY could die—
 DE LANCEY change Love's bridal-wreath,
 For laurels from the hand of Death—
 Saw'st gallant MILLER's failing eye
 Still bent where Albion's banners fly,
 And CAMERON, in the shock of steel,
 Die like the offspring of Lochiel;
 And generous GORDON, 'mid the strife,
 Fall while he watch'd his leader's life.—
 Ah! though her guardian angel's shield
 Fenced Britain's hero through the field,

Fate not the less her power made known,
Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own!

- xxii. Forgive, brave Dead, the imperfect lay!
Who may your names, your numbers, say?
What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
To each the dear-earn'd praise assign,
From high-born chiefs of martial fame
To the poor soldier's lowlier name?
Lightly ye rose that dawning day,
From your cold couch of swamp and clay,
To fill, before the sun was low,
The bed that morning cannot know.—
Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
And sacred be the heroes' sleep,
Till time shall cease to run;
And ne'er beside their noble grave,
May Briton pass and fail to crave
A blessing on the fallen brave
Who fought with Wellington!

- xxiii. Farewell, sad Field! whose blighted face
Wears desolation's withering trace;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shatter'd huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong,
That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont!
Yet though thy garden's green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shatter'd beeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blacken'd portals torn,
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
Has not such havoc bought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame?
Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new;
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remember'd long,
Shall live the towers of Hougomont,
And Field of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION

Stern tide of human Time! that know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast

Successive generations to their doom;
While thy capacious stream has equal room
For the gay bark where Pleasure's streamers sport,
And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port;—

Stern tide of Time! through what mysterious change
Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven!
For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange
Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.
And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
Such unexpected bursts of joy and woe,
Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,
Until the awful term when Thou shalt cease to flow!

Well hast thou stood, my Country!—the brave fight
Hast well maintain'd through good report and ill;
In thy just cause and in thy native might,
And in Heaven's grace and justice constant still;
Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill
Of half the world against thee stood array'd,
Or when, with better views and freer will,
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid—though slowly rose,
And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
While like the dawn that in the orient glows
On the broad wave its earlier lustre came;
Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
And Maida's myrtles gleam'd beneath its ray,
Where first the soldier, stung with generous shame
Rivall'd the heroes of the wat'ry way,
And wash'd in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
Gallant Saint George, the flower of Chivalry,
For thou hast faced, like him, a dragon foe,
And rescued innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down, like him, tyrannic might,
And to the gazing world mayst proudly show
The chosen emblem of thy sainted Knight,
Who quell'd devouring pride, and vindicated right.

Yet 'mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired,
Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down:
'Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known;
—Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired—
'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

APPENDIX

MOTTOES FROM THE WAVERLEY NOVELS

"THE ANTIQUARY"

(1)	TITLE-PAGE.
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I knew Anselmo. He was shrewd and prudent,
 Wisdom and cunning had their shares of him;
 But he was shrewish as a wayward child,
 And pleased again by toys which childhood please;
 As—book of fables graced with print of wood,
 Or else the jingling of a rusty medal,
 Or the rare melody of some old ditty,
 That first was sung to please King Pepin's cradle.

(2)	CHAP. IX.
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"Be brave," she cried, "you yet may be our guest,
 Our haunted room was ever held the best:
 If, then, your valour can the fight sustain
 Of rustling curtains, and the clinking chain;
 If your courageous tongue have powers to talk,
 When round your bed the horrid ghost shall walk;
 If you dare ask it why it leaves its tomb,
 I'll see your sheets well air'd, and show the room."
True Story.

(3)	CHAP. XI.
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Sometimes he thinks that Heaven this vision sent,
 And order'd all the pageants as they went;
 Sometimes that only 'twas wild Fancy's play,
 The loose and scatter'd relics of the day.

(4)	CHAP. XII.
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Beggar!—the only freemen of your Commonwealth
 Free above Scot-free, that observe no laws,
 Obey no governor, use no religion
 But what they draw from their own ancient customs
 Or constitute themselves, yet they are no rebels.
Brome.

(5)

CHAP. XIX.

Here has been such a stormy encounter,
 Betwixt my cousin Captain, and this soldier,
 About I know not what!—nothing, indeed;
 Competitions, degrees, and comparatives
 Of soldiership!— *A Faire Quarrel.*

(6)

CHAP. XX.

—— If you fail honour here,
 Never presume to serve her any more;
 Bid farewell to the integrity of arms,
 And the honourable name of soldier
 Fall from you, like a shiver'd wreath of laurel
 By thunder struck from a desertlesse forehead.
A Faire Quarrel.

(7)

CHAP. XXI.

—— The Lord Abbot had a soul
 Subtile and quick, and searching as the fire:
 By magic stairs he went as deep as hell,
 And if in devils' possession gold be kept,
 He brought some sure from thence—'tis hid in caves,
 Known, save to me, to none——
The Wonder of a Kingdome.

(8)

CHAP. XXVII.

—— Many great ones
 Would part with half their states, to have the plan
 And credit to beg in the first style. *Beggar's Bush.*

(9)

CHAP. XXX.

Who is he?—One that for the lack of land
 Shall fight upon the water—he hath challenged
 Formerly the grand whale; and by his titles
 Of Leviathan, Behemoth, and so forth.
 He tilted with a sword-fish—Marry, sir,
 Th' aquatic had the best—the argument
 Still galls our champion's breech. *Old Play.*

(10)

CHAP. XXXI.

Tell me not of it, friend—when the young weep,
 Their tears are lukewarm brine;—from our old eyes
 Sorrow falls down like hail-drops of the North,
 Chilling the furrows of our wither'd cheeks,
 Cold as our hopes, and harden'd as our feeling—
 Theirs, as they fall, sink sightless—ours recoil,
 Heap the fair plain, and bleaken all before us.

Old Play.

(11)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Remorse—she ne'er forsakes us!—
 A bloodhound stanch—she tracks our rapid step
 Through the wild labyrinth of youthful frenzy,
 Unheard, perchance, until old age hath tamed us;
 Then in our lair, when Time hath chill'd our joints,
 And main'd our hope of combat, or of flight,
 We hear her deep-mouth'd bay, announcing all
 Of wrath and woe and punishment that bides us.

Old Play.

(12)

CHAP. XXXIV.

Still in his dead hand clench'd remain the strings
 That thrill his father's heart—e'en as the limb,
 Lopp'd off and laid in grave, retains, they tell us,
 Strange commerce with the mutilated stump,
 Whose nerves are twinging still in maim'd existence.

Old Play.

(13)

CHAP. XXXV.

——— Life, with you,
 Glows in the brain and dances in the arteries;
 'Tis like the wine some joyous guest hath quaff'd,
 That glads the heart and elevates the fancy:—
 Mine is the poor residuum of the cup,
 Vapid, and dull, and tasteless, only soiling
 With its base dregs the vessel that contains it.

Old Play.

(14)

CHAP. XXXVII.

Yes! I love Justice well—as well as you do—
 But, since the good dame's blind, she shall excuse me,
 If, time and reason fitting, I prove dumb;—
 The breath I utter now shall be no means
 To take away from me my breath in future.

Old Play.

(15)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Well, well, at worst, 'tis neither theft nor coinage,
 Granting I knew all that you charge me with.
 What, tho' the tomb hath born a second birth,
 And given the wealth to one that knew not on'
 Yet fair exchange was never robbery,
 Far less pure bounty——

Old Play.

(16)

CHAP. XL.

Life ebbs from such old age, unmark'd and silent,
 As the slow neap-tide leaves yon stranded galley.—
 Late she rock'd merrily at the least impulse
 That wind or wave could give; but now her keel
 Is settling on the sand, her mast has ta'en
 An angle with the sky, from which it shifts not.
 Each wave receding shakes her less and less,
 Till, bedded on the strand, she shall remain
 Useless as motionless.

Old Play.

(17)

CHAP. XLI.

So, while the Goose, of whom the fable told,
 Incumbent, brooded o'er her eggs of gold,
 With hand outstretch'd, impatient to destroy,
 Stole on her secret nest the cruel Boy,
 Whose gripe rapacious changed her splendid dream
 For wings vain fluttering, and for dying scream.

The Loves of the Sea-Weeds.

(18)

CHAP. XLII.

Let those go see who will—I like it not—
 For, say he was a slave to rank and pomp,
 And all the nothings he is now divorced from
 By the hard doom of stern necessity;
 Yet is it sad to mark his alter'd brow,
 Where Vanity adjusts her flimsy veil
 O'er the deep wrinkles of repentant Anguish.

Old Play.

(19)

CHAP. XLIII.

Fortune, you say, flies from us—She but circles,
 Like the fleet sea-bird round the fowler's skiff,—
 Lost in the mist one moment, and the next
 Brushing the white sail with her whiter wing,
 As if to court the aim.—Experience watches,
 And has her on the wheel.—

Old Play.

(20)

CHAP. XLIV.

Nay, if she love me not, I care not for her;
 Shall I look pale because the maiden blooms?
 Or sigh because she smiles—and smiles on others?
 Not I, by Heaven!—I hold my peace too dear,
 To let it, like the plume upon her cap,
 Shake at each nod that her caprice shall dictate.

Old Play.¹

¹ "It may be worth noting, that it was in correcting the proof-sheets of *The Antiquary* that Scott first took to equipping his chapters

"THE BLACK DWARF"

(1)

CHAP. V.

The bleakest rock upon the loneliest heath
 Feels, in its barrenness, some touch of spring;
 And, in the April dew, or beam of May,
 Its moss and lichen freshen and revive;
 And thus the heart, most sear'd to human pleasure,
 Melts at the tear, joys in the smile of woman.

Beaumont.

(2)

CHAP. XVI.

—————'Twas time and griefs
 That framed him thus: Time, with his fairer hand,
 Offering the fortunes of his former days,
 The former man may make him—Bring us to him,
 And chance it as it may.

Old Play.

"OLD MORTALITY"

(1)

CHAP. V.

Arouse thee, youth!—it is no common call,—
 God's Church is leaguer'd—haste to man the wall;
 Haste where the Red-cross banners wave on high,
 Signals of honour'd death or victory.

James Duff.

(2)

CHAP. XIV.

My hounds may a' rin masterless,
 My hawks may fly frae tree to tree,
 My lord may grip my vassal lands,
 For there again maun I never be!

Old Ballad.

with mottoes of his own fabrication. On one occasion he happened to ask John Ballantyne, who was sitting by him, to hunt for a particular passage in Beaumont and Fletcher. John did as he was bid, but did not succeed in discovering the lines. 'Hang it, Johnnie,' cried Scott, 'I believe I can make a motto sooner than you will find one.' He did so accordingly; and from that hour, whenever memory failed to suggest an appropriate epigraph, he had recourse to the inexhaustible mines of '*old play*' or '*old ballad*,' to which we owe some of the most exquisite verses that ever flowed from his pen."—*Life.*

(3)

CHAP. XXXIV.

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
 To all the sensual world proclaim,
 One crowded hour of glorious life
 Is worth an age without a name.

Anonymous.

"ROB ROY"

(1)

CHAP. X.

In the wide pile, by others heeded not,
 Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
 Whose gloomy aisles and bending shelves contain,
 For moral hunger food, and cures for moral pain.

Anonymous.

"The library at Osbaldistone Hall was a gloomy room," &c.

(2)

CHAP. XIII.

Dire was his thought, who first in poison steep'd
 The weapon form'd for slaughter—direr his,
 And worthier of damnation, who instill'd
 The mortal venom in the social cup,
 To fill the veins with death instead of life. *Anonymous.*

(3)

CHAP. XXII.

Look round thee, young Astolpho: Here's the place
 Which men (for being poor) are sent to starve in,—
 Rude remedy, I trow, for sore disease.
 Within these walls, stifled by damp and stench,
 Doth Hope's fair torch expire; and at the snuff,
 Ere yet 'tis quite extinct, rude, wild, and wayward,
 The desperate revelries of wild despair,
 Kindling their hell-born cressets, light to deeds
 That the poor captive would have died ere practised,
 Till bondage sunk his soul to his condition.

The Prison, Scene iii. Act i.

(4)

CHAP. XXVII.

Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen,
 Earth, clad in russet, scorn'd the lively green;
 No birds, except as birds of passage, flew;
 No bee was heard to hum, no dove to coo;
 No streams, as amber smooth, as amber clear,
 Were seen to glide, or heard to warble here.

Prophecy of Famine.

(5) CHAP. XXXI.
 "Woe to the vanquish'd!" was stern Brenno's word,
 When sunk proud Rome beneath the Gallic sword—
 "Woe to the vanquish'd!" when his massive blade
 Bore down the scale against her ransom weigh'd,
 And on the field of foughten battle still,
 Who knows no limit save the victor's will.

The Gaulliad.

(6) CHAP. XXXII.
 And be he safe restored ere evening set,
 Or, if there's vengeance in an injured heart,
 And power to wreak it in an arm'd hand,
 Your land shall ache for't.

Old Play.

"THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN"

(1) CHAP. XIX.
 To man, in this his trial state,
 The privilege is given,
 When lost by tides of human fate,
 To anchor fast in Heaven. *Watts' Hymns.*

(2) CHAP. XXIII.
 Law, take thy victim!—May she find the mercy
 In yon mild heaven which this hard world denies her!

(3) CHAP. XXVII.
 And Need and Misery, Vice and Danger, bind
 In sad alliance, each degraded mind.

(4) CHAP. XXXV.
 ——— I beseech you—
 These tears beseech you, and these chaste hands woo you,
 That never yet were heaved but to things holy—
 Things like yourself—You are a God above us;
 Be as a God, then, full of saving mercy!

The Bloody Brother.

(5) CHAP. XLVI.
 Happy thou art! then happy be,
 Nor envy me my lot;
 Thy happy state I envy thee,
 And peaceful cot.

Lady C——C——l.

"THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR"

(1)

CHAP. VIII.

The hearth in hall was black and dead,
 No board was dight in bower within,
 Nor merry bowl nor welcome bed;
 "Here's sorry cheer," quoth the Heir of Linne.

*Old Ballad,**[Altered from "The Heir of Linne."]*

(2)

CHAP. XIV.

As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle-sound,
 Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round;
 Or, from the garner-door, on æther borne,
 The chaff flies devious from the winnow'd corn;
 So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,
 From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driven.

Anonymous.

(3)

CHAP. XVII.

— Here is a father now,
 Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
 Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
 Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
 To appease the sea at highest:

Anonymous.

(4)

CHAP. XVIII.

Sir, stay at home and take an old man's counsel:
 Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;
 Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.
 Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis homely,
 And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.

The French Courtezan.

(5)

CHAP. XXV.

True-love, an' thou be true,
 Thou has ane kittle part to play,
 For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou
 Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony friend's tale,
 Far better by this heart of mine,
 What time and change of fancy avail,
 A true love-knote to untwine.

Hendersoun.

(6)

CHAP. XXVII.

Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,
 And if she 'scapes my grasp, the fault is mine;
 He that hath buffeted with stern adversity,
 Best knows to shape his course to favouring breezes.

Old Play.

“THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE”

(1)

CHAP. X.

Dark on their journey lour'd the gloomy day,
 Wild were the hills, and doubtful grew the way;
 More dark, more gloomy, and more doubtful, show'd
 The mansion which received them from the road.

The Travellers, a Romance.

(2)

CHAP. XI.

Is this thy castle, Baldwin? Melancholy
 Displays her sable banner from the donjon,
 Dark'ning the foam of the whole surge beneath.
 Were I a habitant, to see this gloom
 Pollute the face of nature, and to hear
 The ceaseless sound of wave and sea-bird's scream,
 I'd wish me in the hut that poorest peasant
 Ere framed to give him temporary shelter.

Browne.

(3)

CHAP. XIV.

This was the entry, then, these stairs—but whither after?
 Yet he that's sure to perish on the land
 May quit the nicety of card and compass,
 And trust the open sea without a pilot.

Tragedy of Brennovalt.

“IVANHOE”

(1)

CHAP. XIX.

Away! our journey lies through dell and dingle,
 Where the blithe fawn trips by its timid mother,
 Where the broad oak, with intercepting boughs,
 Chequers the sun-beam in the green sward alley—
 Up and away!—for lovely paths are these
 To tread, when the glad sun is on his throne:
 Less pleasant, and less safe, when Cynthia's lamp,
 With doubtful glimmer lights the dreary forest.

Ettrick Forest.

(2)

CHAP. XXI.

When autumn nights were long and drear,
 And forest walks were dark and dim,
 How sweetly on the pilgrim's ear
 Was wont to steal the hermit's hymn!

Devotion borrows Music's tone,
 And Music took Devotion's wing,
 And, like the bird that hails the sun,
 They soar to heaven, and soaring sing.

The Hermit of St. Clement's Well.

(3)

CHAP. XXVII.

The hottest horse will oft be cool,
 The dullest will show fire;
 The friar will often play the fool,
 The fool will play the friar.

Old Song.

(4)

CHAP. XXIX.

This wandering race, sever'd from other men,
 Boast yet their intercourse with human arts;
 The seas, the woods, the deserts which they haunt,
 Find them acquainted with their secret treasures;
 And unregarded herbs, and flowers, and blossoms,
 Display undream'd-of powers when gather'd by them.

The Jew.

(5)

CHAP. XXXI.

Approach the chamber, look upon his bed.
 His is the passing of no peaceful ghost,
 Which, as the lark arises to the sky,
 'Mid morning's sweetest breeze and softest dew,
 Is wing'd to heaven by good men's sighs and tears!
 Anselm parts otherwise.

Old Play.

(6)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Trust me, each state must have its policies:
 Kingdoms have edicts, cities have their charters;
 Even the wild outlaw, in his forest-walk,
 Keeps yet some touch of civil discipline.
 For not since Adam wore his verdant apron,
 Hath man with man in social union dwelt,
 But laws were made to draw that union closer.

Old Play.

(7)

CHAP. XXXVI.

Arouse the tiger of Hyrcanian deserts,
 Strive with the half-starved lion for his prey;
 Lesser the risk, than rouse the slumbering fire
 Of wild Fanaticism.

Anonymous.

(8)

CHAP. XXXVII.

Say not my art is fraud—all live by seeming.
 The beggar begs with it, and the gay courtier
 Gains land and title, rank and rule, by seeming:
 The clergy scorn it not, and the bold soldier
 Will eke with it his service.—All admit it,
 All practise it; and he who is content
 With showing what he is, shall have small credit
 In church, or camp, or state.—So wags the world.

Old Play.

(9)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Stern was the law which bade its vot'ries leave
 At human woes with human hearts to grieve;
 Stern was the law, which at the winning wile
 Of frank and harmless mirth forebade to smile;
 But sterner still, when high the iron-rod
 Of tyrant power she shook, and call'd that power of God.

The Middle Ages.

“ THE MONASTERY ”

(1)

CHAP. I.

O ay! the Monks, the Monks, they did the mischief!
 Theirs all the grossness, all the superstition
 Of a most gross and superstitious age.—
 May HE be praised that sent the healthful tempest,
 And scatter'd all these pestilential vapours;
 But that we owed them *all* to yonder Harlot
 Throned on the seven hills with her cup of gold,
 I will as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,
 That old Moll White took wing with cat and broomstick,
 And raised the last night's thunder.

Old Play.

(2)

CHAP. II.

In yon lone vale his early youth was bred.
 Not solitary then—the bugle-horn
 Of fell Alecto often waked its windings,

From where the brook joins the majestic river,
To the wild northern bog, the curliu's haunt,
Where oozes forth its first and feeble streamlet.

Old Play.

(3)

CHAP. V.

A priest, ye cry, a priest!—lame shepherds they,
How shall they gather in the straggling flock?
Dumb dogs which bark not—how shall they compel
The loitering vagrants to the Master's fold?
Fitter to bask before the blazing fire,
And snuff the mess neat-handed Phillis dresses,
Than on the snow-wreath battle with the wolf.

Reformation.

(4)

CHAP. VI.

Now let us sit in conclave. That these weeds
Be rooted from the vineyard of the Church,
That these foul tares be sever'd from the wheat,
We are, I trust, agreed.—Yet how to do this,
Nor hurt the wholesome crop and tender vine-plants,
Craves good advisement.

The Reformation.

(5)

CHAP. VIII.

Nay, dally not with time, the wise man's treasure,
Though fools are lavish on't—the fatal Fisher
Hooks souls, while we waste moments.

Old Play.

(6)

CHAP. XI.

You call this education, do you not?
Why, 'tis the forced march of a herd of bullocks
Before a shouting drover. The glad van
Move on at ease, and pause a while to snatch
A passing morsel from the dewy green-sward,
While all the blows, the oaths, the indignation,
Fall on the croupe of the ill-fated laggard
That cripples in the rear.

Old Play.

(7)

CHAP. XII.

There's something in that ancient superstition,
Which, erring as it is, our fancy loves.
The spring that, with its thousand crystal bubbles,
Bursts from the bosom of some desert rock
In secret solitude, may well be deem'd
The haunt of something purer, more refined,
And mightier than ourselves.

Old Play.

(8)

CHAP. XIV.

Nay, let me have the friends who eat my victuals,
 As various as my dishes. The feast's naught,
 Where one huge plate predominates.—John Plaintext,
 He shall be mighty beef, our English staple;
 The worthy Alderman, a butter'd dumpling;
 Yon pair of whisker'd Cornets, ruffs and rees;
 Their friend the Dandy, a green goose in sippets.
 And so the board is spread at once and fill'd
 On the same principle—Variety.

New Play.

(9)

CHAP. XV.

He strikes no coin, 'tis true, but coins new phrases,
 And vends them forth as knaves vend gilded counters,
 Which wise men scorn, and fools accept in payment.

Old Play.

(10)

CHAP. XVI.

A courtier extraordinary, who by diet
 Of meats and drinks, his temperate exercise,
 Choice music, frequent bath, his horary shifts
 Of shirts and waistcoats, means to immortalise
 Mortality itself, and makes the essence
 Of his whole happiness the trim of court.

Magnetic Lady.

(11)

CHAP. XIX.

Now choose thee, gallant, betwixt wealth and honour;
 There lies the pelf, in sum to bear thee through
 The dance of youth, and the turmoil of manhood,
 Yet leave enough for age's chimney-corner;
 But an thou grasp to it, farewell Ambition!
 Farewell each hope of bettering thy condition,
 And raising thy low rank above the churls
 That till the earth for bread!

Old Play.

(12)

CHAP. XXI.

Indifferent, but indifferent—pshaw! he doth it not
 Like one who is his craft's master—ne'ertheless
 I have seen a clown confer a bloody coxcomb
 On one who was a master of defence.

Old Play.

(13)

CHAP. XXII.

Yes, life hath left him—every busy thought,
 Each fiery passion, every strong affection,
 The sense of outward ill and inward sorrow,
 Are fled at once from the pale trunk before me;

And I have given that which spoke and moved,
Thought, acted, suffer'd, as a living man,
To be a ghastly form of bloody clay,
Soon the foul food for reptiles.

Old Play.

(14)

CHAP. XXIII.

'Tis when the wound is stiffening with the cold,
The warrior first feels pain—'tis when the heat
And fiery fever of his soul is past,
The sinner feels remorse.

Old Play.

(15)

CHAP. XXIV.

I'll walk on tiptoe; arm my eye with caution,
My heart with courage, and my hand with weapon,
Like him who ventures on a lion's den.

Old Play.

(16)

CHAP. XXVII.

Now, by Our Lady, Sheriff, 'tis hard reckoning,
That I, with every odds of birth and barony,
Should be detain'd here for the casual death
Of a wild forester, whose utmost having
Is but the brazen buckle of the belt
In which he sticks his hedge-knife.

Old Play.

(17)

CHAP. XXX.

You call it an ill angel—it may be so;
But sure I am, among the ranks which fell,
'Tis the first fiend ere counsell'd man to rise,
And win the bliss the sprite himself had forfeited.

Old Play.

(18)

CHAP. XXXI.

At school I knew him—a sharp-witted youth,
Grave, thoughtful, and reserved amongst his mates,
Turning the hours of sport and food to labour,
Starving his body to inform his mind.

Old Play.

(19)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Now on my faith this gear is all entangled,
Like to the yarn-clew of the drowsy knitter,
Dragg'd by the frolic kitten through the cabin,
While the good dame sits nodding o'er the fire—
Masters, attend; 'twill crave some skill to clear it.

Old Play.

(20)

CHAP. XXXIV.

It is not texts will do it—Church artillery
 Are silenced soon by real ordnance,
 And canons are but vain opposed to cannon.
 Go, coin your crosier, melt your church plate down.
 Bid the starved soldier banquet in your halls,
 And quaff your long-saved hogsheads—Turn them out
 Thus primed with your good cheer, to guard your wall,
 And they will venture for't.—
Old Play.

"THE ABBOT"

(1)

CHAP. V.

—————In the wild storm,
 The seaman hews his mast down, and the merchant
 Heaves to the billows wares he once deem'd precious:
 So prince and peer, 'mid popular contentions,
 Cast off their favourites.
Old Play.

(2)

CHAP. VI.

Thou hast each secret of the household, Francis.
 I dare be sworn thou hast been in the buttery
 Steeping thy curious humour in fat ale,
 And in the butler's tattle—ay, or chatting
 With the glib waiting-woman o'er her comfits—
 These bear the key to each domestic mystery.

Old Play.

(3)

CHAP. VIII.

The sacred tapers' lights are gone,
 Grey moss has clad the altar stone,
 The holy image is o'erthrown,
 The bell has ceased to toll.
 The long ribb'd aisles are burst and shrunk,
 The holy shrines to ruin sunk,
 Departed is the pious monk,
 God's blessing on his soul!

Rediviva.

(4)

CHAP. XI.

Life hath its May, and all is mirthful then:
 The woods are vocal, and the flowers all odour;
 Its very blast has mirth in't,—and the maidens,
 The while they don their cloaks to skreen their kirtles,
 Laugh at the rain that wets them.

Old Play.

(5)

CHAP. XII.

Nay, hear me, brother—I am elder, wiser,
And holier than thou; and age, and wisdom,
And holiness, have peremptory claims,
And will be listen'd to.

Old Play.

(6)

CHAP. XIV.

Not the wild billow, when it breaks its barrier—
Not the wild wind, escaping from its cavern—
Not the wild fiend, that mingles both together,
And pours their rage upon the ripening harvest,
Can match the wild freaks of this mirthful meeting—
Comic, yet fearful—droll, and yet destructive.

The Conspiracy.

(7)

CHAP. XVI.

Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now,
Darker lip and darker brow,
Statelier step, more pensive mien,
In thy face and gait are seen:
Thou must now brook midnight watches;
Take thy food and sport by snatches!
For the gambol and the jest,
Thou wert wont to love the best,
Graver follies must thou follow,
But as senseless, false, and hollow.

Life, a Poem.

(8)

CHAP. XIX.

It is and is not—'tis the thing I sought for,
Have kneel'd for, pray'd for, risk'd my fame and life for,
And yet it is not—no more than the shadow
Upon the hard, cold, flat, and polish'd mirror,
Is the warm, graceful, rounded, living substance
Which it presents in form and lineament.

Old Play.

(9)

CHAP. XXIII.

Give me a morsel on the greensward rather,
Coarse as you will the cooking—Let the fresh spring
Bubble beside my napkin—and the free birds,
Twittering and chirping, hop from bough to bough,
To claim the crumbs I leave for perquisites—
Your prison-feasts I like not.

The Woodman, a Drama.

(10)

CHAP. XXIV.

'Tis a weary life this——
Vaults overhead, and grates and bars around me,
And my sad hours spent with as sad companions,
Whose thoughts are brooding o'er their own mischances,
Far, far too deeply to take part in mine.

The Woodsman.

(11)

CHAP. XXV.

And when Love's torch hath set the heart in flame,
Comes Signor Reason, with his saws and cautions,
Giving such aid as the old grey-beard Sexton,
Who from the church-vault drags his crazy engine,
To ply its dribbling ineffectual streamlet
Against a conflagration.

Old Play.

(12)

CHAP. XXVIII.

Yes, it is she whose eyes look'd on thy childhood,
And watch'd with trembling hope thy dawn of youth,
That now, with these same eye-balls, dimm'd with age,
And dimmer yet with tears, sees thy dishonour.

Old Play.

(13)

CHAP. XXX.

In some breasts passion lies conceal'd and silent,
Like war's swart powder in a castle vault,
Until occasion, like the linstock, lights it;
Then comes at once the lightning and the thunder,
And distant echoes tell that all is rent asunder.

Old Play.

(14)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Death distant?—No, alas! he's ever with us,
And shakes the dart at us in all our actings:
He lurks within our cup, while we're in health;
Sits by our sick-bed, mocks our medicines;
We cannot walk, or sit, or ride, or travel,
But Death is by to seize us when he lists.

The Spanish Father.

(15)

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ay, Pedro,—Come you here with mask and lantern,
Ladder of ropes, and other moonshine tools—
Why, youngster, thou may'st cheat the old Duenna,
Flatter the waiting-woman, bribe the valet;
But know, that I her father play the Gryphon,
Tameless and sleepless, proof to fraud or bribe,
And guard the hidden treasure of her beauty.

The Spanish Father.

(16)

CHAP. XXXV.

It is a time of danger, not of revel,
When churchmen turn to masquers.

The Spanish Father.

(17)

CHAP. XXXVII.

Ay, sir—our ancient crown, in these wild times,
 Oft stood upon a cast—the gamester's ducat,
 So often staked, and lost, and then regain'd,
 Scarce knew so many hazards. *The Spanish Father.*

" KENILWORTH "

(1)

CHAP. IV.

Not serve two masters?—Here's a youth will try it—
 Would fain serve God, yet give the devil his due;
 Says grace before he doth a deed of villany,
 And returns his thanks devoutly when 'tis acted.

Old Play.

(2)

CHAP. V.

———He was a man
 Versed in the world as pilot in his compass.
 The needle pointed ever to that interest
 Which was his loadstar, and he spread his sails
 With vantage to the gale of others' passion.

The Deceiver—a Tragedy.

(3)

CHAP. VII.

———This is He
 Who rides on the court-gale; controls its tides;
 Knows all their secret shoals and fatal eddies;
 Whose frown abases, and whose smile exalts.
 He shines like any rainbow—and, perchance,
 His colours are as transient.

Old Play.

(4)

CHAP. XIV.

This is rare news thou tell'st me, my good fellow;
 There are two bulls fierce battling on the green
 For one fair heifer—if the one goes down,
 The dale will be more peaceful, and the herd,
 Which have small interest in their brulziement,
 May pasture there in peace.

Old Play.

(5)

CHAP. XVII.

Well, then, our course is chosen; spread the sail,—
 Heave oft the lead, and mark the soundings well;
 Look to the helm, good master; many a shoal
 Marks this stern coast, and rocks where sits the siren,
 Who, like ambition, lures men to their ruin.

The Shipwreck.

(6)

CHAP. XXIII.

Now God be good to me in this wild pilgrimage!
 All hope in human aid I cast behind me.
 Oh, who would be a woman? who that fool,
 A weeping, pining, faithful, loving woman?
 She hath hard measure still where she hopes kindest,
 And all her bounties only make ingrates.

Love's Pilgrimage.

(7)

CHAP. XXV.

Hark! the bells summon, and the bugle calls,
 But she the fairest answers not; the tide
 Of nobles and of ladies throngs the halls,
 But she the loveliest must in secret hide.
 What eyes were thine, proud Prince, which in the gleam
 Of yon gay meteors lost that better sense,
 That o'er the glow-worm doth the star esteem,
 And merit's modest blush o'er courtly insolence?

The Glass Slipper.

(8)

CHAP. XXVIII.

What, man, ne'er lack a draught, when the full can
 Stands at thine elbow, and craves emptying!—
 Nay, fear not me, for I have no delight
 To watch men's vices, since I have myself
 Of virtue nought to boast of.—I'm a striker,
 Would have the world strike with me, pell-mell, all.

Pandæmonium.

(9)

CHAP. XXIX.

Now fare thee well, my master! if true service
 Be guerdon'd with hard looks, e'en cut the tow-line,
 And let our barks across the pathless flood
 Hold different courses.

Shipwreck.

(10)

CHAP. XXX.

Now bid the steeple rock—she comes, she comes!
 Speak for us, bells! speak for us, shrill-tongued tuckets!
 Stand to the linstock, gunner; let thy cannon
 Play such a peal, as if a Paynim foe
 Came stretch'd in turban'd ranks to storm the ramparts.
 We will have pageants too; but that craves wit,
 And I'm a rough-hewn soldier.

The Virgin-Queen, a Tragi-Comedy.

(11)

CHAP. XXXII.

The wisest sovereigns err like private men,
 And royal hand has sometimes laid the sword

Of chivalry upon a worthless shoulder,
Which better had been branded by the hangman.
What then? Kings do their best,—and they and we
Must answer for the intent, and not the event. *Old Play.*

(12)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Here stands the victim—there the proud betrayer,
E'en as the hind pull'd down by strangling dogs
Lies at the hunter's feet, who courteous proffers
To some high dame, the Dian of the chase,
To whom he looks for guerdon, his sharp blade,
To gash the sobbing throat. *The Woodsman.*

(13)

CHAP. XL.

High o'er the eastern steep the sun is beaming,
And darkness flies with her deceitful shadows;
So truth prevails o'er falsehood. *Old Play.*

"THE PIRATE"

(1)

CHAP. II.

'Tis not alone the scene—the man, Anselmo,
The man finds sympathies in these wild wastes,
And roughly tumbling seas, which fairer views
And smoother waves deny him. *Ancient Drama.*

(2)

CHAP. VII.

She does no work by halves, yon raving ocean;
Engulphing those she strangles, her wild womb
Affords the mariners whom she hath dealt on,
Their death at once, and sepulchre. *Old Play.*

(3)

CHAP. IX.

This is a gentle trader, and a prudent—
He's no Autolycus, to blear your eye,
With quips of worldly gauds and gamesomeness;
But seasons all his glittering merchandise
With wholesome doctrine suited to the use,
As men sauce goose with sage and rosemary. *Old Play.*

(4)

CHAP. XI.

———All your ancient customs,
And long-descended usages, I'll change.
Ye shall not eat, nor drink, nor speak, nor move,
Think, look, or walk, as ye were wont to do;
Even your marriage-beds shall know mutation;
The bride shall have the stock, the groom the wall;
For all old practice will I turn and change,
And call it reformation—marry, will I!
'Tis Even that we're at Odds.

(5)

CHAP. XIV.

We'll keep our customs—what is law itself,
 But old establish'd custom? What religion,
 (I mean, with one-half of the men that use it,)
 Save the good use and wont that carries them
 To worship how and where their fathers worshipp'd?
 All things resolve in custom—we'll keep ours. *Old Play.*

(6)

CHAP. XXV.

———I do love these ancient ruins!
 We never tread upon them but we set
 Our foot upon some reverend history,
 And questionless, here in this open court,
 (Which now lies naked to the injuries
 Of stormy weather,) some men lie interr'd,
 Loved the Church so well, and gave so largely to it,
 They thought it should have canopied their bones
 Till doomsday;—but all things have their end—
 Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
 Must have like death which we have. *Duchess of Malfy.*

(7)

CHAP. XXIX.

See yonder woman, whom our swains revere,
 And dread in secret, while they take her counsel
 When sweetheart shall be kind, or when cross dame shall
 die;
 Where lurks the thief who stole the silver tankard,
 And how the pestilent murrain may be cured;—
 This sage adviser's mad, stark mad, my friend;
 Yet, in her madness, hath the art and cunning
 To wring fools' secrets from their inmost bosoms,
 And pay inquirers with the coin they gave her. *Old Play.*

(8)

CHAP. XXX.

What ho, my jovial mates! come on! we'll frolic it
 Like fairies frisking in the merry moonshine,
 Seen by the curtal friar, who, from some christening,
 Or some blithe bridal, hies belated cell-ward—
 He starts, and changes his bold bottle swagger
 To churchman's pace professional,—and, ransacking
 His treacherous memory for some holy hymn,
 Finds but the roundel of the midnight catch. *Old Play.*

(9)

CHAP. XXXII.

I strive like to the vessel in the tide-way,
 Which, lacking favouring breeze, hath not the power
 To stem the powerful current.—Even so,
 Resolving daily to forsake my vices,

Habit, strong circumstance, renew'd temptation,
Sweep me to sea again.—O heavenly breath,
Fill thou my sails, and aid the feeble vessel,
Which ne'er can reach the blessed port without thee!
'Tis Odds when Evens meet.

(10) CHAP. XXXIII.
Parental love, my friend, has power o'er wisdom,
And is the charm, which, like the falconer's lure,
Can bring from heaven the highest soaring spirits.—
So, when famed Prosper doff'd his magic robe,
It was Miranda pluck'd it from his shoulders. *Old Play.*

(11) CHAP. XXXIV.
Hark to the insult loud, the bitter sneer,
The fierce threat answering to the brutal jeer;
Oaths fly like pistol-shots, and vengeful words
Clash with each other like conflicting swords.—
The robber's quarrel by such sounds is shown,
And true men have some chance to gain their own.
Captivity, a Poem.

(12) CHAP. XXXVII.
Over the mountains and under the waves,
Over the fountains and under the graves,
Over floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way. *Old Song.*

"THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL"

(1) CHAP. I.
Now Scot and English are agreed,
And Saunders hastes to cross the Tweed,
Where, such the splendours that attend him,
His very mother scarce had ken'd him.
His metamorphosis behold,
From Glasgow freeze to cloth of gold;
His back-sword, with the iron-hilt,
To rapier, fairly hatch'd and gilt;
Was ever seen a gallant braver!
His very bonnet's grown a beaver.
The Reformation.

(2)

CHAP. II.

This, sir, is one among the Seignory,
 Has wealth at will, and will to use his wealth,
 And wit to increase it. Marry, his worst folly
 Lies in a thriftless sort of charity,
 That goes a-gadding sometimes after objects,
 Which wise men will not see when thrust upon them.

The Old Couple.

(3)

CHAP. IV.

Ay, sir, the clouted shoe hath oftentimes craft in't,
 As says the rustic proverb; and your citizen,
 In's grogam suit, gold chain, and well-black'd shoes,
 Bears under his flat cap oftentimes a brain
 Wiser than burns beneath the cap and feather,
 Or seethes within the statesman's velvet nightcap.

Read me my riddle.

(4)

CHAP. V.

Wherefore come ye not to court?
 Certain 'tis the rarest sport;
 There are silks and jewels glistening,
 Prattling fools and wise men listening,
 Bullies among brave men justling,
 Beggars amongst nobles bustling;
 Low-breath'd talkers, minion lispers,
 Cutting honest throats by whispers;
 Wherefore come ye not to court?
 Skelton swears 'tis glorious sport.

Skelton Skeltonizeth.

(5)

CHAP. VI.

O, I do know him—'tis the mouldy lemon
 Which our court wits will wet their lips withal,
 When they would sauce their honied conversation
 With somewhat sharper flavour.—Marry, sir,
 That virtue's wellnigh left him—all the juice
 That was so sharp and poignant, is squeezed out;
 While the poor rind, although as sour as ever,
 Must season soon the draff we give our grunterns,
 For two-legg'd things are weary on't.

The Chamberlain—A Comedy.

(6)

CHAP. VII.

Things needful we have thought on; but the thing
 Of all most needful—that which Scripture terms,
 As if alone it merited regard,
 The ONE thing needful—that's yet unconsider'd.

The Chamberlain.

(7)

CHAP. VIII.

Ah! mark the matron well—and laugh not, Harry,
 At her old steeple-hat and velvet guard—
 I've call'd her like the ear of Dionysius;
 I mean that ear-form'd vault, built o'er the dungeon,
 To catch the groans and discontented murmurs
 Of his poor bondsmen.—Even so doth Martha
 Drink up, for her own purpose, all that passes,
 Or is supposed to pass, in this wide city—
 She can retail it too, if that her profit
 Shall call on her to do so; and retail it
 For your advantage, so that you can make
 Your profit jump with hers. *The Conspiracy.*

(8)

CHAP. X.

Bid not thy fortune troll upon the wheels
 Of yonder dancing cubs of mottled bone;
 And drown it not, like Egypt's royal harlot,
 Dissolving her rich pearl in the brimm'd wine-cup,
 'These are the arts, Lothario, which shrink acres
 Into brief yards—bring sterling pounds to farthings,
 Credit to infamy; and the poor gull,
 Who might have lived an honour'd, easy life,
 To ruin, and an unregarded grave. *The Changes.*

(9)

CHAP. XII.

———— This is the very barn-yard,
 Where muster daily the prime cocks o' the game,
 Ruffle their pinions, crow till they are hoarse,
 And spar about a barleycorn. Here, too, chickens
 The callow, unfledged brood of forward folly,
 Learn first to rear the crest, and aim the spur,
 And tune their note like full-plumed Chanticleer.
The Bear Garden.

(10)

CHAP. XIII.

Let the proud salmon gorge the feather'd hook,
 Then strike, and then you have him.—He will wince;
 Spin out your line that it shall whistle from you
 Some twenty yards or so, yet you shall have him—
 Marry! you must have patience—the stout rock
 Which is his trust, hath edges something sharp;
 And the deep pool hath ooze and sludge enough
 To mar your fishing—'less you are more careful.
Albion or the Double Kings.

(11)

CHAP. XVI.

Give way—give way—I must and will have justice.
 And tell me not of privilege and place;

Where I am injured, there I'll sue redress.
 Look to it, every one who bars my access;
 I have a heart to feel the injury,
 A hand to right myself, and, by my honour,
 That hand shall grasp what grey-beard Law denies me.
The Chamberlain.

(12) CHAP. XVII.
 Come hither, young one—Mark me! Thou art now
 'Mongst men o' the sword, that live by reputation
 More than by constant income—Single-suited
 They are, I grant you; yet each single suit
 Maintains, on the rough guess, a thousand followers—
 And they be men, who, hazarding their all,
 Needful apparel, necessary income,
 And human body, and immortal soul,
 Do in the very deed but hazard nothing—
 So strictly is that ALL bound in reversion;
 Clothes to the broker, income to the usurer,—
 And body to disease, and soul to the foul fiend;
 Who laughs to see Soldadoes and fooladoes,
 Play better than himself his game on earth.
The Mohocks.

(13) CHAP. XVIII.
Mother. What! dazzled by a flash of Cupid's mirror,
 With which the boy, as mortal urchins wont,
 Flings back the sunbeam in the eye of passengers—
 Then laughs to see them stumble!
Daughter. Mother! no—
 It was a lightning-flash which dazzled me,
 And never shall these eyes see true again.
Beef and Pudding.—An Old English Comedy.

(14) CHAP. XIX.
 By this good light, a wench of matchless mettle!
 This were a leaguer-lass to love a soldier,
 To bind his wounds, and kiss his bloody brow,
 And sing a roundel as she help'd to arm him,
 Though the rough foeman's drums were beat so nigh,
 They seem'd to bear the burden. *Old Play.*

(15) CHAP. XX.
 Credit me, friend, it hath been ever thus,
 Since the ark rested on Mount Ararat.
 False man hath sworn, and woman hath believed—
 Repented and reproach'd, and then believed once more.
The New World.

(16)

CHAP. XXI.

Rove not from pole to pole—the man lives here
 Whose razor's only equall'd by his beer;
 And where, in either sense, the cockney-put
 May, if he pleases, get confounded *cut*.

On the Sign of an Alehouse kept by a Barber.

(17)

CHAP. XXII.

Chance will not do the work—Chance sends the breeze;
 But if the pilot slumber at the helm,
 The very wind that wafts us towards the port
 May dash us on the shelves.—The steersman's part is
 vigilance,

Blow it or rough or smooth.

Old Play.

(18)

CHAP. XXIV.

This is the time—Heaven's maiden-sentinel
 Hath quitted her high watch—the lesser spangles
 Are paling one by one; give me the ladder
 And the short lever—bid Anthony
 Keep with his carabine the wicket-gate;
 And do thou bare thy knife and follow me,
 For we will in and do it—darkness like this
 Is dawning of our fortunes.

Old Play.

(19)

CHAP. XXV.

Death finds us 'mid our playthings—snatches us,
 As a cross nurse might do a wayward child,
 From all our toys and baubles. His rough call
 Unlooses all our favourite ties on earth;
 And well if they are such as may be answer'd
 In yonder world, where all is judged of truly. *Old Play.*

(20)

CHAP. XXVI.

Give us good voyage, gentle stream—we stun not
 Thy sober ear with sounds of revelry;
 Wake not the slumbering echoes of thy banks
 With voice of flute and horn—we do but seek
 On the broad pathway of thy swelling bosom
 To glide in silent safety. *The Double Bridal.*

(21)

CHAP. XXVII.

This way lie safety and a sure retreat;
 Yonder lie danger, shame, and punishment.
 Most welcome danger then—Nay, let me say,
 Though spoke with swelling heart—welcome e'en shame;
 And welcome punishment—for, call me guilty,
 I do but pay the tax that's due to justice;
 And call me guiltless, then that punishment
 Is shame to those alone who do inflict it. *The Tribunal.*

(22)

CHAP. XXIX.

How fares the man on whom good men would look
 With eyes where scorn and censure combated,
 But that kind Christian love hath taught the lesson—
 That they who merit most contempt and hate,
 Do most deserve our pity——

Old Play.

(23)

CHAP. XXXI.

Marry, come up, sir, with your gentle blood!
 Here's a red stream beneath this coarse blue doublet,
 That warms the heart as kindly as if drawn
 From the far source of old Assyrian kings,
 Who first made mankind subject to their sway.

Old Play.

(24)

CHAP. XXXV.

We are not worse at once—the course of evil
 Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,
 An infant's hand might stem its breach with clay;
 But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy—
 Ay, and religion too,—shall strive in vain
 To turn the headlong torrent.

Old Play.

“PEVERIL OF THE PEAK”

(1)

CHAP. II.

Why then, we will have bellowing of beeves,
 Broaching of barrels, brandishing of spigots;
 Blood shall flow freely, but it shall be gore
 Of herds and flocks, and venison and poultry,
 Join'd to the brave heart's-blood of John-a-Barleycorn!

Old Play.

(2)

CHAP. IV.

No, sir,—I will not pledge—I'm one of those
 Who think good wine needs neither bush nor preface
 To make it welcome. If you doubt my word,
 Fill the quart-cup, and see if I will choke on't.

Old Play.

(3)

CHAP. VI.

You shall have no worse prison than my chamber,
 Nor jailer than myself.

The Captain.

(4)

CHAP. XVI.

Ascasto. Can she not speak?

Oswald. If speech be only in accented sounds,
 Framed by the tongue and lips, the maiden's dumb;
 But if by quick and apprehensive look,

By motion, sign, and glance, to give each meaning,
Express as clothed in language, be term'd speech,
She hath that wondrous faculty; for her eyes,
Like the bright stars of heaven, can hold discourse,
Though it be mute and soundless. *Old Play.*

(5) CHAP. XVII.
This is a love meeting? See the maiden mourns,
And the sad suitor bends his looks on earth.
There's more hath pass'd between them than belongs
To Love's sweet sorrows. *Old Play.*

(6) CHAP. XIX.
Now, hoist the anchor; mates—and let the sails
Give their broad bosom to the buxom wind,
Like lass that woes a lover. *Anonymous.*

(7) CHAP. XXII.
He was a fellow in a peasant's garb;
Yet one could censure you a woodcock's carving,
Like any courtier at the ordinary. *The Ordinary.*

(8) CHAP. XXIV.
We meet, as men see phantoms in a dream,
Which glide and sigh, and sign, and move their lips,
But make no sound; or, if they utter voice,
'Tis but a low and undistinguish'd moaning,
Which has nor word nor sense of utter'd sound.
The Chieftain.

(9) CHAP. XXV.
The course of human life is changeful still
As is the fickle wind and wandering rill;
Or, like the light dance which the wild-breeze weaves
Amidst the faded race of fallen leaves;
Which now its breath bears down, now tosses high,
Beats to the earth, or wafts to middle sky.
Such, and so varied, the precarious play
Of fate with man, frail tenant of a day! *Anonymous.*

(10) CHAP. XXVI.
Necessity—thou best of peacemakers,
As well as surest prompter of invention—
Help us to composition! *Anonymous.*

(11) CHAP. XXVII.
——— This is some creature of the elements
Most like your sea-gull. He can wheel and whistle
His screaming song, e'en when the storm is loudest—

Take for his sheeted couch the restless foam
Of the wild wave-crest—slumber in the calm,
And dally with the storm. Yet 'tis a gull,
An arrant gull, with all this. *The Chieftain.*

(12)

CHAP. XXXI.

I fear the devil worst when gown and cassock,
Or, in the lack of them, old Calvin's cloak,
Conceals his cloven hoof. *Anonymous.*

(13)

CHAP. XXXIII.

'Tis the black ban-dog of our jail—Pray look on him,
But at a wary distance—rouse him not—
He bays not till he worries. *The Black Dog of Newgate.*

(14)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

"Speak not of niceness, when there's chance of wreck,"
The captain said, as ladies writhed their neck
To see the dying dolphin flap the deck:
"If we go down, on us these gentry sup;
We dine upon them, if we haul them up.
Wise men applaud us when we eat the eaters,
As the devil laughs when keen folks cheat the cheaters."
The Sea Voyage.

(15)

CHAP. XL.

— Contentions fierce,
Ardent, and dire, spring from no petty cause. *Albion.*

(16)

CHAP. XLIII.

He came amongst them like a new-raised spirit,
To speak of dreadful judgments that impend,
And of the wrath to come. *The Reformer.*

(17)

CHAP. XLIV.

And some for safety took the dreadful leap;
Some for the voice of Heaven seem'd calling on them;
Some for advancement, or for lucre's sake—
I leap'd in frolic. *The Dream.*

(18)

CHAP. XLV.

High feasting was there there—the gilded roofs
Rung to the wassail-health—the dancer's step
Sprung to the chord responsive—the gay gamester
To fate's disposal flung his heap of gold,
And laugh'd alike when it increased or lessen'd:
Such virtue hath court-air to teach us patience
Which schoolmen preach in vain.

Why come ye not to Court?

(19)

CHAP. XLVI.

Here stand I tight and trim,
 Quick of eye, though little of limb;
 He who denieth the word I have spoken,
 Betwixt him and me shall lances be broken.

Lay of the Little John de Saintré.

"QUENTIN DURWARD"

(1)

CHAP. XI.

Painters show Cupid blind—Hath Hymen eyes?
 Or is his sight warp'd by those spectacles
 Which parents, guardians, and advisers, lend him,
 That he may look through them on lands and mansions,
 On jewels, gold, and all such rich donations,
 And see their value ten times magnified?—
 Methinks 'twill brook a question.

The Miseries of Enforced Marriage.

(2)

CHAP. XII.

This is a lecturer so skill'd in policy,
 That (no disparagement to Satan's cunning)
 He well might read a lesson to the devil,
 And teach the old seducer new temptations. *Old Play.*

(3)

CHAP. XIV.

I see thee yet, fair France—thou favour'd land
 Of art and nature—thou art still before me;
 Thy sons, to whom their labour is a sport,
 So well thy grateful soil returns its tribute;
 Thy sun-burnt daughters, with their laughing eyes
 And glossy raven-locks. But, favour'd France,
 Thou hast had many a tale of woe to tell,
 In ancient times as now. *Anonymous.*

(4)

CHAP. XV.

He was a son of Egypt, as he told me,
 And one descended from those dread magicians,
 Who waged rash war, when Israel dwelt in Goshen,
 With Israel and her Prophet—matching rod
 With his the sons of Levi's—and encountering
 Jehovah's miracles with incantations,
 Till upon Egypt came the avenging Angel,
 And those proud sages wept for their first-born,
 As wept the unletter'd peasant. *Anonymous.*

(5)

CHAP. XXIV.

Rescue or none, Sir Knight, I am your captive;
Deal with me what your nobleness suggests—
Thinking the chance of war may one day place you
Where I must now be reckon'd—i' the roll
Of melancholy prisoners.

Anonymous.

(6)

CHAP. XXV.

No human quality is so well wove
In warp and woof, but there's some flaw in it;
I've known a brave man fly a shepherd's cur,
A wise man so demean him, drivelling idiocy
Had well nigh been ashamed on't. For your crafty,
Your worldly-wise man, he, above the rest,
Weaves his own snares so fine, he's often caught in them.

Old Play.

(7)

CHAP. XXVI.

When Princes meet, astrologers may mark it
An ominous conjunction, full of boding,
Like that of Mars with Saturn.

Old Play.

(8)

CHAP. XXIX.

Thy time is not yet out—the devil thou servest
Has not as yet deserted thee. He aids
The friends who drudge for him, as the blind man
Was aided by the guide, who lent his shoulder
O'er rough and smooth, until he reach'd the brink
Of the fell precipice—then hurl'd him downward.

Old Play.

(9)

CHAP. XXX.

Our counsels waver like the unsteady bark,
That reels amid the strife of meeting currents.

Old Play.

(10)

CHAP. XXXI.

Hold fast thy truth, young soldier.—Gentle maiden,
Keep you your promise plight—leave age its subtleties,
And grey-hair'd policy its maze of falsehood;
But be you candid as the morning sky,
Ere the high sun sucks vapours up to stain it.

The Trial.

"ST. RONAN'S WELL"

(1) CHAP. II.—THE GUEST.
 Quis novus hic hospes? *Dido apud Virgilium.*
 Ch'm-maid!—The Gemman in the front parlour!
Boots's free Translation of the Eneid.

(2) CHAP. III.
 There must be government in all society—
 Bees have their Queen, and stag herds have their leader;
 Rome had her Consuls, Athens had her Archons,
 And we, sir, have our Managing Committee.
The Album of St. Ronans.

(3) CHAP. X.
 Come, let me have thy counsel, for I need it;
 Thou art of those, who better help their friends
 With sage advice, than usurers with gold,
 Or brawlers with their swords—I'll trust to thee,
 For I ask only from thee words, not deeds.
The Devil hath met his Match.

(4) CHAP. XI.
 Nearest of blood should still be next in love;
 And when I see these happy children playing,
 While William gathers flowers for Ellen's ringlets,
 And Ellen dresses flies for William's angle,
 I scarce can think, that in advancing life,
 Coldness, unkindness, interest, or suspicion,
 Will e'er divide that unity so sacred,
 Which Nature bound at birth. *Anonymous.*

(5) CHAP. XXIII.
 Oh! you would be a vestal maid, I warrant,
 The bride of Heaven—Come—we may shake your
 purpose:
 For here I bring in hand a jolly suitor
 Hath ta'en degrees in the seven sciences
 That ladies love best—He is young and noble,
 Handsome and valiant, gay and rich, and liberal.
The Nun.

(6) CHAP. XXXII.
 It comes—it wrings me in my parting hour,
 The long-hid crime—the well-disguised guilt.
 Bring me some holy priest to lay the spectre! *Old Play.*

(7)

CHAP. XXXV.

Sedet post equitem atra cura———

Still though the headlong cavalier,
 O'er rough and smooth, in wild career,
 Seems racing with the wind;
 His sad companion—ghastly pale,
 And darksome as a widow's veil,
 CARE—keeps her seat behind.

Horace.

(8)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

What sheeted ghost is wandering through the storm?
 For never did a maid of middle earth
 Choose such a time or spot to vent her sorrows.

Old Play.

(9)

CHAP. XXXIX.

Here come we to our close—for that which follows
 Is but the tale of dull, unvaried misery.
 Steep crags and headlong lins may court the pencil
 Like sudden haps, dark plots, and strange adventures;
 But who would paint the dull and fog-wrapt moor,
 In its long tract of sterile desolation?

Old Play.

“ THE BETROTHED ”

(1)

CHAP. II.

In Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
 With rapid clangour hurried far;
 Each hill and dale the note rebounds,
 But when return the sons of war!
 Thou, born of stern Necessity,
 Dull Peace! the valley yields to thee,
 And owns thy melancholy sway.

Welsh Poem.

(2)

CHAP. VII.

O, sadly shines the morning sun
 On leaguer'd castle wall,
 When bastion, tower, and battlement,
 Seem nodding to their fall.

Old Ballad.

(3)

CHAP. XII.

Now all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
 And ladies of England that happy would prove,
 Marry never for houses, nor marry for land,
 Nor marry for nothing but only love.

Family Quarrels.

(4)

CHAP. XIII.

Too much rest is rust,
 There's ever cheer in changing;
 We tyne by too much trust,
 So we'll be up and ranging.

Old Song.

(5)

CHAP. XVII.

Ring out the merry bells, the bride approaches.
 The blush upon her cheek has shamed the morning,
 For that is dawning palely. Grant, good saints,
 These clouds betoken nought of evil omen! *Old Play.*

(6)

CHAP. XXVII.

Julia. ——— Gentle sir,

You are our captive—but we'll use you so,
 That you shall think your prison joys may match
 Whate'er your liberty hath known of pleasure.

Roderick. No, fairest, we have trifled here too long;
 And, lingering to see your roses blossom,
 I've let my laurels wither.

Old Play.

"THE TALISMAN"

(1)

CHAP. IX.

This is the Prince of Leeches; fever, plague,
 Cold rheum, and hot podagra, do but look on him,
 And quit their grasp upon the tortured sinews.

Anonymous.

(2)

CHAP. XI.

One thing is certain in our Northern land,
 Allow that birth, or valour, wealth, or wit,
 Give each precedence to their possessor,
 Envy, that follows on such eminence,
 As comes the lyme-hound on the roebuck's trace,
 Shall pull them down each one. *Sir David Lindsay.*

(3)

CHAP. XIII.

You talk of Gaiety and Innocence!
 The moment when the fatal fruit was eaten,
 They parted ne'er to meet again; and Malice
 Has ever since been playmate to light Gaiety,
 From the first moment when the smiling infant
 Destroys the flower or butterfly he toys with,
 To the last chuckle of the dying miser,
 Who on his deathbed laughs his last to hear
 His wealthy neighbour has become a bankrupt.

Old Play.

(4)

CHAP. XVI.

'Tis not her sense—for sure, in that
 There's nothing more than common;
 And all her wit is only chat,
 Like any other woman.

Song.

(5)

CHAP. XVII.

Were every hair upon his head a life,
 And every life were to be supplicated
 By numbers equal to those hairs quadrupled,
 Life after life should out like waning stars
 Before the daybreak—or as festive lamps,
 Which have lent lustre to the midnight revel,
 Each after each are quench'd when guests depart!

Old Play.

(6)

CHAP. XIX.

Must we then sheath our still victorious sword;
 Turn back our forward step, which ever trode
 O'er foemen's necks the onward path of glory;
 Unclasp the mail, which with a solemn vow,
 In God's own house we hung upon our shoulders;
 That vow, as unaccomplished as the promise
 Which village nurses make to still their children,
 And after think no more of?—

The Crusade, a Tragedy.

(7)

CHAP. XX.

When beauty leads the lion in her toils,
 Such are her charms, he dare not raise his mane,
 Far less expand the terror of his fangs,
 So great Alcides made his club a distaff,
 And spun to please fair Omphalé.

Anonymous.

(8)

CHAP. XXIII.

'Mid these wild scenes Enchantment waves her hand,
 To change the face of the mysterious land:
 Till the bewildering scenes around us seem
 The vain productions of a feverish dream.

Astolpho, a Romance.

(9)

CHAP. XXIV.

——— A grain of dust

Soiling our cup, will make our sense reject
 Fastidiously the draught which we did thirst for;
 A rusted nail, placed near the faithful compass,
 Will sway it from the truth, and wreck the argosy.
 Even this small cause of anger and disgust
 Will break the bonds of amity 'mongst princes,
 And wreck their noblest purposes.

The Crusade.

(10)

CHAP. XXVI.

The tears I shed must ever fall!
 I weep not for an absent swain,
 For time may happier hours recall,
 And parted lovers meet again.

I weep not for the silent dead,
 Their pains are past, their sorrows o'er,
 And those that loved their steps must tread,
 When death shall join to part no more.

But worse than absence, worse than death,
 She wept her lover's sullied fame,
 And, fired with all the pride of birth,
 She wept a soldier's injured name. *Ballad.*

"WOODSTOCK"

(1)

CHAP. II.

Come forth, old man—Thy daughter's side
 Is now the fitting place for thee:
 When Time hath quell'd the oak's bold pride,
 The youthful tendril yet may hide
 The ruins of the parent tree.

(2)

CHAP. III.

Now, ye wild blades, that make loose inns your stage,
 To vapour forth the acts of this sad age,
 Stout Edgehill fight, the Newberries and the West,
 And northern clashes, where you still fought best;
 Your strange escapes, your dangers void of fear,
 When bullets flew between the head and ear,
 Whether you fought by Damme or the Spirit,
 Of you I speak. *Legend of Captain Jones.*

(3)

CHAP. IV.

————— Yon path of greensward
 Winds round by sparry grot and gay pavilion;
 There is no flint to gall thy tender foot,
 There's ready shelter from each breeze, or shower.—
 But Duty guides not that way—see her stand,
 With wand entwined with amaranth, near yon cliffs.

Oft where she leads thy blood must mark thy footsteps,
 Oft where she leads thy head must bear the storm,
 And thy shrunk form endure heat, cold, and hunger;
 But she will guide you up to noble heights,
 Which he who gains seems native of the sky,
 While earthly things lie stretch'd beneath his feet,
 Diminish'd, shrunk, and valueless—— *Anonymous.*

(4)

CHAP. V.

My tongue pads slowly under this new language,
 And starts and stumbles at these uncouth phrases.
 They may be great in worth and weight, but hang
 Upon the native glibness of my language
 Like Saul's plate-armour on the shepherd boy,
 Encumbering and not arming him. *J. B.*

(5)

CHAP. X.

————— Here we have one head
 Upon two bodies—your two-headed bullock
 Is but an ass to such a prodigy.
 These two have but one meaning, thought, and counsel;
 And when the single noddle has spoke out,
 The four legs scrape assent to it. *Old Play.*

(6)

CHAP. XIV.

————— Deeds are done on earth,
 Which have their punishment ere the earth closes
 Upon the perpetrators. Be it the working
 Of the remorse-stirr'd fancy, or the vision,
 Distinct and real, of unearthly being,
 All ages witness, that beside the couch
 Of the fell homicide oft stalks the ghost
 Of him he slew, and shows the shadowy wound.
Old Play.

(7)

CHAP. XVII.

We do that in our zeal,
 Our calmer moments are afraid to answer. *Anonymous.*

(8)

CHAP. XXIV.

The deadliest snakes are those which, twined 'mongst
 flowers,
 Blend their bright colouring with the varied blossoms,
 Their fierce eyes glittering like the spangled dew-drop;
 In all so like what nature has most harmless,
 That sportive innocence, which dreads no danger,
 Is poison'd unawares. *Old Play.*

"CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE"

(1) "THE TWO DROVERS"

CHAP. II.

Were ever such two loving friends!—

How could they disagree?

O thus it was he loved him dear,

And thought how to requite him,

And having no friend left but he,

He did resolve to fight him.

Duke upon Duke.

(2) "MY AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR"

There are times

When Fancy plays her gambols, in despite

Even of our watchful senses, when in sooth

Substance seems shadow, shadow substance seems,

When the broad, palpable, and marked partition,

'Twixt that which is and is not, seems dissolved,

As if the mental eye gain'd power to gaze

Beyond the limits of the existing world.

Such hours of shadowy dreams I better love

Than all the gross realities of life.

Anonymous.

"THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH"

(1)

INTRODUCTORY.

The ashes here of murder'd Kings

Beneath my footsteps sleep;

And yonder lies the scene of death,

Where Mary learn'd to weep.

Captain Marjoribanks.

(2)

CHAP. I.

"Behold the Tiber!" the vain Roman cried,

Viewing the ample Tay from Baiglie's side;

But where's the Scot that would the vaunt repay,

And hail the puny Tiber for the Tay? *Anonymous.*

(3)

CHAP. XI.

Fair is the damsel, passing fair—

Sunny at distance gleams her smile!

Approach—the cloud of woeful care

Hangs trembling in her eye the while.

Lucinda, a Ballad.

(4)
O for a draught of power to steep
The soul of agony in sleep!

CHAP. XV.

Bertha.

(5)
Lo! where he lies embalm'd in gore,
His wound to Heaven cries;
The floodgates of his blood implore
For vengeance from the skies.

CHAP. XXIII.

Uranus and Psyche.

“ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN”

(1)
Cursed be the gold and silver, which persuade
Weak man to follow far fatiguing trade.
The lily, peace, outshines the silver store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore.
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town.

CHAP. III.

Hassan, or the Camel-driver.

(2)
——— I was one
Who loved the greenwood bank and lowing herd,
The russet prize, the lowly peasant's life,
Season'd with sweet content, more than the halls
Where revellers feast to fever-height. Believe me,
There ne'er was poison mix'd in maple bowl.

CHAP. V.

Anonymous.

(3)
When we two meet, we meet like rushing torrents;
Like warring winds, like flames from various points,
That mate each other's fury—there is nought
Of elemental strife, were fiends to guide it,
Can match the wrath of man.

CHAP. VI.

Frenaud.

(4)
We know not when we sleep nor when we wake.
Visions distinct and perfect cross our eye,
Which to the slumberer seem realities;
And while they waked, some men have seen such sights
As set at nought the evidence of sense,
And left them well persuaded they were dreaming.

CHAP. X.

Anonymous.

(5)

CHAP. XI.

These be the adept's doctrines—every element
 Is peopled with its separate race of spirits.
 The airy Sylphs on the blue ether float;
 Deep in the earthy cavern skulks the Gnome;
 The sea-green Naiad skims the ocean-billow,
 And the fierce fire is yet a friendly home
 To its peculiar sprite—the Salamander. *Anonymous.*

(6)

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster,
 The grapes of juice divine,
 Which make the soldier's jovial courage muster;
 O, blessed be the Rhine! *Drinking Song.*

(7)

CHAP. XXII.

Tell me not of it—I could ne'er abide
 The mummery of all that forced civility.
 "Pray, seat yourself, my lord." With cringing hams
 The speech is spoken, and with bended knee,
 Heard by the smiling courtier.—"Before you, sir?
 It must be on the earth then." Hang it all!
 The pride which cloaks itself in such poor fashion
 Is scarcely fit to swell a beggar's bosom. *Old Play.*

(8)

CHAP. XXVIII.

A mirthful man he was—the snows of age
 Fell, but they did not chill him. Gaiety,
 Even in life's closing, touch'd his teeming brain
 With such wild visions as the setting sun
 Raises in front of some hoar glacier,
 Painting the bleak ice with a thousand hues.
Old Play.

(9)

CHAP. XXX.

Ay, this is he who wears the wreath of bays
 Wove by Apollo and the Sisters Nine,
 Which Jove's dread lightning scathes not. He hath doft
 The cumbrous helm of steel, and flung aside
 The yet more galling diadem of gold;
 While, with a leafy circlet round his brows,
 He reigns the King of Lovers and of Poets.

(10)

CHAP. XXXI.

——— Want you a man
 Experienced in the world and its affairs?
 Here he is for your purpose.—He's a monk.
 He hath forsworn the world and all its work—
 The rather that he knows it passing well,
 'Special the worst of it, for he's a monk. *Old Play.*

(11)

CHAP. XXXV.

—— Here's a weapon now,
 Shall shake a conquering general in his tent,
 A monarch on his throne, or reach a prelate,
 However holy be his offices,
 E'en while he serves the altar.

Old Play.

"COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS"

(1)

CHAP. II.

Othus. ————— This superb successor
 Of the earth's mistress, as thou vainly speakest,
 Stands 'midst these ages as, on the wide ocean,
 The last spared fragment of a spacious land,
 That in some grand and awful ministration
 Of mighty nature has engulfed been,
 Doth lift aloft its dark and rocky cliffs
 O'er the wild waste around, and sadly frowns
 In lonely majesty. *Constantine Paleologus, Scene I.*

(2)

CHAP. III.

Here, youth, thy foot unbrace,
 Here, youth, thy brow unbraid,
 Each tribute that may grace
 The threshold here be paid.
 Walk with the stealthy pace
 Which Nature teaches deer,
 When, echoing in the chase,
 The hunter's horn they hear.

The Court.

(3)

CHAP. V.

The storm increases—'tis no sunny shower,
 Foster'd in the moist breast of March or April,
 Or such as parched Summer cools his lip with;
 Heaven's windows are flung wide; the inmost deeps
 Call in hoarse greeting one upon another;
 On comes the flood in all its foaming horrors,
 And where's the dike shall stop it!

The Deluge, a Poem.

(4)

CHAP. VI.

Vain man! thou mayst esteem thy love as fair
 As fond hyperboles suffice to raise.
 She may be all that's matchless in her person,
 And all-divine in soul to match her body;
 But take this from me—thou shalt never call her
 Superior to her sex, while *one* survives,
 And I am her true votary.

Old Play.

(5)

CHAP. VIII.

Through the vain webs which puzzle sophists' skill,
 Plain sense and honest meaning work their way;
 So sink the varying clouds upon the hill,
 When the clear dawning brightens into day.

Dr. Watts.

(6)

CHAP. IX.

Between the foaming jaws of the white torrent,
 The skilful artist draws a sudden mound;
 By level long he subdivides their strength,
 Stealing the waters from their rocky bed,
 First to diminish what he means to conquer;
 Then, for the residue he forms a road,
 Easy to keep, and painful to desert,
 And guiding to the end the planner aim'd at.

The Engineer.

(7)

CHAP. X.

These were wild times—the antipodes of ours:
 Ladies were there, who oftener saw themselves
 In the broad lustre of a foeman's shield
 Than in a mirror, and who rather sought
 To match themselves in battle, than in dalliance
 To meet a lover's onset.—But though Nature
 Was outraged thus, she was not overcome.

Feudal Times.

(8)

CHAP. XI.

Without a ruin, broken, tangled, cumbrous,
 Within it was a little paradise,
 Where Taste had made her dwelling. Statuary,
 First-born of human art, moulded her images,
 And bade men mark and worship.

Anonymous.

(9)

CHAP. XII.

The parties met. The wily, wordy Greek,
 Weighing each word, and canvassing each syllable;
 Evading, arguing, equivocating.
 And the stern Frank came with his two-hand sword,
 Watching to see which way the balance sways,
 That he may throw it in, and turn the scales.

Palestine.

(10)

CHAP. XVI.

Strange ape of man! who loathes thee while he scorns thee;

Half a reproach to us and half a jest.

What fancies can be ours ere we have pleasure

In viewing our own form, our pride and passions,

Reflected in a shape grotesque as thine! *Anonymous.*

(11)

CHAP. XVII.

'Tis strange that, in the dark sulphureous mine,

Where wild ambition piles its ripening stores

Of slumbering thunder, Love will interpose

His tiny torch, and cause the stern explosion

To burst, when the deviser's least aware. *Anonymous.*

(12)

CHAP. XXIV.

All is prepared—the chambers of the mine

Are cramm'd with the combustible, which, harmless

While yet unkindled, as the sable sand,

Needs but a spark to change its nature so,

That he who wakes it from its slumbrous mood,

Dreads scarce the explosion less than he who knows

That 'tis his towers which meet its fury. *Anonymous.*

(13)

CHAP. XXV.

Heaven knows its time; the bullet has its billet,

Arrow and javelin each its destined purpose;

The fated beasts of Nature's lower strain

Have each their separate task. *Old Play.*

“CASTLE DANGEROUS”

(1)

CHAP. V.

A tale of sorrow, for your eyes may weep;

A tale of horror, for your flesh may tingle;

A tale of wonder, for the eyebrows arch,

And the flesh curdles if you read it rightly. *Old Play.*

(2)

CHAP. XI.

Where is he? Has the deep earth swallow'd him?

Or hath he melted like some airy phantom

That shuns the approach of morn and the young sun?

Or hath he wrapt him in Cimmerian darkness,

And pass'd beyond the circuit of the sight

With things of the night's shadows? *Anonymous.*

(3)

CHAP. XIV.

The way is long, my children, long and rough—
The moors are dreary, and the woods are dark;
But he that creeps from cradle on to grave,
Unskill'd save in the velvet course of fortune,
Hath miss'd the discipline of noble hearts. *Old Play.*

(4)

CHAP. XVIII.

His talk was of another world—his bodements
Strange, doubtful, and mysterious; those who heard him
Listen'd as to a man in feverish dreams,
Who speaks of other objects than the present,
And mutters like to him who sees a vision. *Old Play.*

(5)

CHAP. XX.

Cry the wild war-note, let the champions pass,
Do bravely each, and God defend the right;
Upon Saint Andrew thrice can they thus cry,
And thrice they shout on height,
And then marked them on the Englishmen,
As I have told you right.
Saint George the bright, our ladies' knight,
To name they were full fain;
Our Englishmen they cried on height,
And thrice they shout again. *Old Ballad.*

NOTES

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

— *the heights of Uam Var.*—P. 3.

Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times, it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this stronghold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small enclosure, or recess, surrounded with large rocks, and open above head. It may have been originally designed as a toil for deer, who might get in from the outside, but would find it difficult to return. This opinion prevails among the old sportsmen and deer stalkers in the neighbourhood.

Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed.—P. 4.

“The hounds which we call Saint Hubert’s hounds, are commonly all blacke, yet neuertheless, the race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St. Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace. Whereupon we may conceiue that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise. To return vnto my former purpose, this kind of dogges hath bene dispersed through the counties of Henault, Lorayne, Flanders, and Burgoyne. They are mighty of body, neuertheless their legges are low and short, likewise they are not swift, although they be very good of sent, hunting chaces which are farre straggled, fearing neither water nor cold, and doe more couet the chaces that smell, as foxes, bore, and such like, than other, because they find themselves neither of swiftness nor courage to hunt and kill the chaces that are lighter and swifter.”—*The noble Art of Venerie or Hunting, translated and collected for the Use of all Noblemen and Gentlemen.* Lond. 1611, 4to, p. 15.

For the death-wound and death-halloo.—P. 4.

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag’s horn being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar, as the old rhyme testifies:—

“If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier,
But barber’s hand will boar’s hurt heal, therefore thou need’st not
fear.”

At all times, however, the task was dangerous, and to be adventured upon wisely and warily, either by getting behind the stag while he was gazing on the hounds, or by watching an opportunity to gallop roundly in upon him, and kill him with the sword.

No pathway meets the wanderer's ken.—P. 7.

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of trees.

To meet with Highland plunderers here.—P. 8.

"In former times, those parts of this district, which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible by strong barriers of rocks, and mountains, and lakes. It was a border country, and, though on the very verge of the low country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to society. 'Tis well known that in the Highlands, it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful, but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another; and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district, by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners."—GRAHAM'S *Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire*. Edin. 1806, p. 97.

Was on the vision'd future bent.—P. 11.

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the Second-sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries.

"The second-sight is a singular faculty, of seeing an otherwise invisible object, without any previous means used by the person that used it for that end: the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see, nor think of anything else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object that was represented to them.

"At the sight of a vision, the eyelids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by, when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me.

"All those who have the second-sight do not always see these visions at once, though they be together at the time. But if one who has this faculty, designedly touch his fellow-seer at the instant of a vision's appearing, then the second sees it as well as the first; and this is sometimes discerned by those that are near them on such occasions."—MARTIN'S *Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo, p. 300, *et seq.*

*Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.*—P. 12.

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden.

"It was situated in the face of a very rough, high, and rocky mountain, called Letternilichk, still a part of Benalder, full of great stones and crevices, and some scattered wood interspersed. The habitation

called the Cage, in the face of that mountain, was within a small thick bush of wood. There were first some rows of trees laid down, in order to level the floor for a habitation; and as the place was steep, this raised the lower side to an equal height with the other: and these trees, in the way of joists or planks, were levelled with earth and gravel. There were betwixt the trees, growing naturally on their own roots, some stakes fixed in the earth, which, with the trees, were interwoven with ropes, made of heath and birch twigs, up to the top of the Cage, it being of a round or rather oval shape; and the whole thatched and covered over with fog. The whole fabric hung, as it were, by a large tree, which reclined from the one end, all along the roof, to the other, and which gave it the name of the Cage; and by chance there happened to be two stones at a small distance from one another, in the side next the precipice, resembling the pillars of a chimney, where the fire was placed. The smoke had its vent out here, all along the fall of the rock, which was so much of the same colour, that one could discover no difference in the clearest day."—HOME's *History of the Rebellion*, Lond. 1802, 4to, p. 381.

*My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascart.—P. 13.*

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. There is a romance in the Auchinleck MS., in which Ferragus is described.

Ascart, or Ascart, makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of a gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Sir Bevis himself.

Though all unask'd his birth and name.—P. 14.

The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish, to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance, which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.

————— *a harp unseen.—P. 14.*

"They" (the Highlanders) "delight much in musicke, but chiefly in harps and clairschoes of their own fashion. The strings of the clairschoes are made of brass wire, and the strings of the harps, of sinews; which strings they strike either with their nayles, growing long, or else with an instrument appointed for that use. They take great pleasure to decke their harps and clairschoes with silver and precious stones; the poore ones that cannot attayne hereunto, decke them with christall. They sing verses prettily compound, containyng (for the most part) prayes of valiant men. There is not almost any other argument, whereof their rhymes intreat. They speak the ancient French language, altered a little."¹ . . . "So late as the latter end of the sixteenth century, as appears by the above quotation, the harp was in common use among the natives of the Western Isles. How it happened that the noisy and unharmonious bagpipe banished the soft and expressive harp, we cannot say; but certain it is, that the bagpipe is now the only instrument that obtains universally in the Highland districts."—CAMPBELL'S *Journey through North Britain*. Lond. 1808, 4to. I. 175.

¹ Vide *Certaine Matters concerning the Realme of Scotland, etc., as they were Anno Domini 1597*. Lond. 1603, 4to.

— The Græme.—P. 20.

The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realised his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the Nonconformists, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.

This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd.—P. 20.

I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound. "But labouring once in these mechanic arts for a devout matrone that had sett him on work, his violl, that hung by him on the wall, of its own accord, without anie man's helpe, distinctly sounded this anthime:—*Gaudent in cælis animæ sanctorum qui Christi vestigia sunt secuti; et quia pro eius amore sanguinem suum fuderunt, ideo cum Christo gaudent æternum.* Whereat all the companie being much astonished, turned their eyes from beholding him working, to looke on that strange accident."—*Flower of the Lives of the most renowned Saints of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, by the R. FATHER HIEROME PORTER. Doway, 1632, 4to, tome i. p. 438.

*Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.*—P. 20.

The downfall of the Douglasses of the house of Angus during the reign of James V. is the event alluded to in the text. The Earl of Angus, it will be remembered, had married the queen-dowager, and availed himself of the right which he thus acquired, as well as of his extensive power, to retain the king in a sort of tutelage, which approached very near to captivity. Several open attempts were made to rescue James from this thralldom, with which he was well known to be deeply disgusted; but the valour of the Douglasses and their allies gave them the victory in every conflict. At length the king, while residing at Falkland, contrived to escape by night out of his own court and palace, and rode full speed to Stirling Castle, where the governor, who was of the opposite faction, joyfully received him. Being thus at liberty, James speedily summoned around him such peers as he knew to be most inimical to the domination of Angus—and laid his complaint before them, says Pitscottie, with great lamentations.

"The lords, hearing the king's complaint and lamentation, and also the great rage, fury, and malice that he bore toward the Earl of Angus, his kin and friends, they concluded all, and thought it best that the earl should be summoned to underly the law; if he found no caution, nor yet compear himself, that he should be put to the horn, with all his kin and friends, so many as were contained in the letters. . . .

But the earl appeared not, nor none for him; and so he was put to the horn, with all his kin and friends: so many as were contained in the summons that compeared not were banished, and holden traitors to the king."

In Holy-Rood a Knight he slew.—P. 22.

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. The instance of the murder of Sir William Stuart of Ochiltree, called *The Bloody*, by the celebrated Francis, Earl of Bothwell, may be produced among many.—See JOHNSTON *Historia Rerum Britannicarum*, ab anno 1572 ad annum 1628. Amstelodami, 1655, fol. p. 135.

The Douglas, like a stricken deer.—P. 22.

The exile state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton, lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise *James the Grieve* (i.e. Reve or Bailiff). "And as he bore the name," says Godscroft, "so did he also execute the office of a grieve or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle of him with whom he lived." From the habits of frugality and observation which he acquired in his humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honourable economy by which he repaired and established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton.—*History of the House of Douglas*, Edinburgh, 1743, vol. ii. p. 160.

——— *Maronnan's cell.*—P. 23.

The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronock, or Marnock, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered. There is a fountain devoted to him in the same parish; but its virtues, like the merits of its patron, have fallen into oblivion.

——— *Bracklinn's thundering wave.*—P. 23.

This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Callender in Menteith. Above a chasm, where the brook precipitates itself from a height of at least fifty feet, there is thrown, for the convenience of the neighbourhood, a rustic footbridge, of about three feet in breadth, and without ledges, which is scarcely to be crossed by a stranger without awe and apprehension.

For Tine-man forged by fairy lore.—P. 24.

Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of *TINEMAN*, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. He was vanquished, as every reader must remember, in the bloody battle of Homildon Hill, near Wooler, where he himself lost an eye, and was

made prisoner by Hotspur. He was no less unfortunate when allied with Percy, being wounded and taken at the battle of Shrewsbury. He was so unsuccessful in an attempt to besiege Roxburgh Castle, that it was called the *Foul Raid*, or disgraceful expedition. His ill fortune left him indeed at the battle of Beaugé, in France; but it was only to return with double emphasis at the subsequent action of Verneuil, the last and most unlucky of his encounters, in which he fell, with the flower of the Scottish chivalry, then serving as auxiliaries in France, and about two thousand common soldiers, A.D. 1424.

*Did, self-unsabarded, foreshow
The footstep of a secret foe.*—P. 24.

Lord Lovat is said, by the author of the *Letters from Scotland*, to have affirmed, that a number of swords that hung up in the hall of the mansion-house, leaped of themselves out of the scabbard at the instant he was born. The story passed current among his clan, but proved an unfortunate omen.—*Letters from Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 214.

*Those thrilling sounds that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.*—P. 25.

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the "current of a heady fight." To this opinion Dr. Beattie has given his suffrage, in the following elegant passage:—"A *pibroch* is a species of tune, peculiar, I think, to the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. It is performed on a bagpipe, and differs totally from all other music. Its rhythm is so irregular, and its notes, especially in the quick movement, so mixed and huddled together, that a stranger finds it impossible to reconcile his ear to it, so as to perceive its modulation. Some of these pibrochs, being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion resembling a march; then gradually quicken into the onset; run off with noisy confusion, and turbulent rapidity, to imitate the conflict and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession."—*Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition*, chap. iii. Note.

Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !—P. 26.

Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Thus the Duke of Argyle is called MacCallum More, or the son of Colin the Great. Sometimes, however, it is derived from armorial distinctions, or the memory of some great feat; thus Lord Seaforth, as chief of the Mackenzies, or Clan-Kennet, bears the epithet of Caber-fae, or *Buck's Head*, as representative of Colin Fitzgerald, founder of the family, who saved the Scottish king when endangered by a stag. But besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy*; sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more*; at other times from some peculiar exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies,

Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.

The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat songs, of the Highlanders, which were usually composed in honour of a favourite chief. They are so adapted as to keep time with the sweep of the oars, and it is easy to distinguish between those intended to be sung to the oars of a galley, where the stroke is lengthened and doubled, as it were, and those which were timed to the rowers of an ordinary boat.

The best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.—P. 26.

The Lennox, as the district is called, which encircles the lower extremity of Loch Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake, and the neighbouring district of Loch Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity, of which the noted conflict of Glen-fruin is a celebrated instance. This was a clan-battle, in which the Macgregors, headed by Allaster Macgregor, chief of the clan, encountered the sept of Colquhouns, commanded by Sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss. It is on all hands allowed that the action was desperately fought, and that the Colquhouns were defeated with great slaughter, leaving two hundred of their name dead upon the field.

Boasts to have tamed the Border-side.—P. 31.

In 1529, James V. made a convention at Edinburgh for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the licence of his minority, and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances. Accordingly, he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, consisting of his principal nobility and their followers, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the intervals of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick Forest, where he hanged over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of King of the Border. But the most noted victim of justice, during that expedition, was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, famous in Scottish song, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the King, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot. The effect of this severity was such, that, as the vulgar expressed it, "the rush-bush kept the cow," and, "thereafter was great peace and rest a long time, wherethrough the King had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick Forest in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the King as good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife."—PITSCOTTIE'S *History*, p. 153.

And while the Fiery Cross glanced.—P. 37.

When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours, if the danger

was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.—P. 38.

"There is bot two myles from Inverloghie, the church of Kilmalee, in Lochyeld. In ancient tymes there was ane church builded upon ane hill, which was above this church, which doeth now stand in this toune; and ancient men doeth say, that there was a battell foughten on ane litle hill not the tenth part of a myle from this church, be certaine men which they did not know what they were. And long tyme thereafter, certaine herds of that toune, and of the next toune, called Unnatt, both wenches and youthes, did on a tyme convene with others on that hill; and the day being somewhat cold, did gather the bones of the dead men that were slayne long tyme before in that place, and did make a fire to warm them. At last they did all remove from the fire, except one maid or wench, which was verie cold, and she did remaine there for a space. She being quyettie her alone, without anie other companie, took up her cloaths above her knees, or thereby, to warm her; a wind did come and caste the ashes upon her and she was conceived of ane man-chyld. Several tymes thereafter she was verie sick, and at last she was knowne to be with chyld. And then her parents did ask at her the matter heiroff, which the wench could not weel answer which way to satisfie them. At last she resolved them with ane answer. As fortune fell upon her concerning this marvellous miracle, the chyld being borne, his name was called *Guli-doir Maghrevollich*, that is to say, the *Black Child, Son to the Bones*. So called, his grandfather sent him to school, and so he was a good schollar, and godlie. He did build this church which doeth now stand in Lochyeld, called Kilmalie."—MACFARLANE, *ut supra*, ii. 188.

The virgin snood did Alice wear.—P. 39.

The *snood*, or riband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch, toy*, or coif, when she passed, by marriage, into the matron state. But if the damsel was so unfortunate as to lose pretensions to the name of maiden, without gaining a right to that of matron, she was neither permitted to use the snood, nor advanced to the graver dignity of the curch.

*The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.*—P. 39.

It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always imbued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The River Demon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forbe and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession with all its attendants. The "noontide hag," called in Gaelic *Glas-lich*, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin, dressed in antique armour, and

having one hand covered with blood, called from that circumstance, *Lham-dearg*, or Red-hand, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemurcus. Other spirits of the desert, all frightful in shape and malignant in disposition, are believed to frequent different mountains and glens of the Highlands, where any unusual appearance, produced by mist, or the strange lights that are sometimes thrown upon particular objects, never fails to present an apparition to the imagination of the solitary and melancholy mountaineer.

The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream.—P. 40.

Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. That of Grant of Grant was called *May Moullach*, and appeared in the form of a girl, who had her arm covered with hair. Grant of Rothiemurcus had an attendant called *Bodach-an-dun*, or the Ghost of the Hill; and many other examples might be mentioned. The Ban-Schie implies a female fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle and streaming hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

The death of the head of a Highland family is also sometimes supposed to be announced by a chain of lights of different colours, called *Dr'eug*, or death of the Druid. The direction which it takes, marks the place of the funeral. [See the Essay on Fairy Superstitions in the Border Minstrelsy.]

*Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast.*—P. 40.

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye, as well as the ear, may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena with which history abounds. Such an apparition is said to have been witnessed upon the side of Southfell mountain, between Penrith and Keswick, upon the 23rd June, 1744, by two persons, William Lancaster of Blakehills, and Daniel Stricket, his servant, whose attestation to the fact, with a full account of the apparition, dated the 21st July 1745, is printed in Clarke's *Survey of the Lakes*. The apparition consisted of several troops of horse moving in regular order, with a steady rapid motion, making a curved sweep around the fell, and seeming to the spectators to disappear over the ridge of the mountain. Many persons witnessed this phenomenon, and observed the last, or last but one, of the supposed troop, occasionally leave his rank, and pass at a gallop to the front, when he resumed the same steady pace. This curious appearance, making the necessary allowance for imagination, may be perhaps sufficiently accounted for by optical deception.—*Survey of the Lakes*, p. 25.

Inch-Cailliach.—P. 40.

Inch-Cailliach, the isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain.

The burial-ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighbouring clans. The monuments of the lairds of Macgregor, and of other families, claiming a descent from the old Scottish King Alpine, are most remarkable. The Highlanders are as zealous of their rights of sepulture, as may be expected from a people whose whole laws and government, if clanship can be called so, turned upon the single principle of family descent. "May his ashes be scattered on the water," was one of the deepest and most solemn imprecations which they used against an enemy. [See a detailed description of the funeral ceremonies of a Highland chieftain in the *Fair Maid of Perth*.]

——— *the dun deer's hide*.—P. 43.

The present *brogue* of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod is a matter altogether out of the question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards; a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of *Red-shanks*. The process is very accurately described by one Elder (himself a Highlander) in the project for a union between England and Scotland, addressed to Henry VIII. "We go a-hunting, and after that we have slain red-deer, we flay off the skin by-and-by, and setting of our bare-foot on the inside thereof, for want of cunning shoemakers, by your grace's pardon, we play the cobblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof as shall reach up to our ankles, pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water may repass where it enters, and stretching it up with a strong thong of the same above our said ankles. So, and please your noble grace, we make our shoes. Therefore, we using such manner of shoes, the rough hairy side outwards, in your grace's dominions of England, we be called *Roughfooted Scots*."—PINKERTON'S *History*, vol. ii. p. 397.

The dismal coronach.—P. 44.

The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ulalatus* of the Romans, and the *Ululoo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death.

The coronach has for some years past been superseded at funerals by the use of the bagpipe; and that also is, like many other Highland peculiarities, falling into disuse, unless in remote districts.

*Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire*.—P. 46.

Inspection of the provincial map of Perthshire, or any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the district.

The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. From thence, it passes towards Callender, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Ardmandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strathgairney.

Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze.—P. 48.

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. This simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be "like fire to heather set."

No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.—P. 49.

The deep and implicit respect paid by the Highland clansmen to their chief, rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. One solemn mode of swearing was by kissing the *dirk*, imprecating upon themselves death by that, or a similar weapon, if they broke their vow. But for oaths in the usual form, they are said to have had little respect.

Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung.—P. 49.

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr. Alexander Campbell, may have originally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the *Urisk*, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian Satyr. The *Urisk* seems not to have inherited, with the form, the petulance of the sylvan deity of the classics: his occupation, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's Lubbar Fiend, or of the Scottish Brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance.

The wild pass of Beal-nam-bo.—P. 50.

Bealach-nam-bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin, treated of in a former note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.

*A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord.*—P. 50.

A Highland chief, being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his body-guards, called *Luichttach*, picked from his clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person.

The author of the *Letters from Scotland* has given us a distinct list of the domestic officers who, independent of *Luichttach*, or *gardes de corps*, belonged to the establishment of a Highland Chief. These are, 1. *The Henchman*. 2. *The Bard*. 3. *Bladier*, or spokesman. 4. *Gillie-more*, or sword-bearer, alluded to in the text. 5. *Gillie-casflue*, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. *Gillie-comstraine*, who leads

the chief's horse. 7. *Gillie-Trushanarinsh*, the baggage man. 8. *The piper*. 9. The piper's gillie or attendant, who carries the bagpipe.

*The Taghairm call'd ; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.*—P. 54.

The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation, he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt the desolate recesses. In some of these Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities, and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds, after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelar deity of the stone, and, as such, to be, if possible, punctually complied with.

When swept our merry-men Gallangad.—P. 54.

This passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old Highland Kern or Ketteran, as they were called. He used to narrate the merry doings of the good old time when he was follower of Rob Roy MacGregor. This leader, on one occasion, thought proper to make a descent upon the lower part of the Loch Lomond district, and summoned all the heritors and farmers to meet at the Kirk of Drymen, to pay him black-mail, *i.e.* tribute for forbearance and protection. As this invitation was supported by a band of thirty or forty stout fellows, only one gentleman, an ancestor, if I mistake not, of the present Mr. Grahame of Gartmore, ventured to decline compliance. Rob Roy instantly swept his land of all he could drive away, and among the spoil was a bull of the old Scottish wild breed, whose ferocity occasioned great plague to the Ketterans. "But ere we had reached the Row of Dennan," said the old man, "a child might have scratched his ears."

Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.—P. 55.

There is a rock so named in the Forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself, by letting down a flagon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall.

— *Watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak ?*—P. 55.

Broke—Quartered.—Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking*, the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. "There is a little gristle," says Turberville, "which is upon the spoone of the brisket, which we call the raven's bone; and I have seen in some places a raven so wont and accustomed to it, that she would never fail to croak and cry for it all the time you were in breaking up of the deer, and would not depart till she had it."

*Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
That party conquers in the strife.*—P. 56.

Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that, on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

Alice Brand.—P. 59.

This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad, which occurs in the *Kæmpe Viser*, a collection of heroic songs, first published in 1591, and reprinted in 1695, inscribed by Anders Sofrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia Queen of Denmark. The story will remind the readers of the Border Minstrelsy of the tale of Young Tam-lane. But this is only a solitary and not very marked instance of coincidence, whereas several of the other ballads in the same collection find exact counterparts in the *Kæmpe Viser*. Which may have been the originals, will be a question for future antiquaries.

——— *the moody Elfin King.*—P. 60.

In a long dissertation upon the Fairy Superstitions, published in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, the most valuable part of which was supplied by my learned and indefatigable friend, Dr. John Leyden, most of the circumstances are collected which can throw light upon the popular belief which even yet prevails respecting them in Scotland. Dr. Grahame, author of an entertaining work upon the Scenery of the Perthshire Highlands, has recorded, with great accuracy, the peculiar tenets held by the Highlanders on this topic, in the vicinity of Loch Katrine. The learned author is inclined to deduce the whole mythology from the Druidical system—an opinion to which there are many objections.

*Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen ?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen ?*—P. 60.

It has been already observed, that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests, peculiarly jealous of their rights of *vert* and *venison*, as appears from the cause of offence taken, in the original Danish ballad. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern *Duergar*, or dwarfs; to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings. In the huge metrical record of German Chivalry, entitled the *Helden-Buch*, Sir Hildebrand, and the other heroes of whom it treats, are engaged in one of their most desperate adventures, from a rash violation of the rose-garden of an Elfin, or Dwarf King. There are yet traces of a belief in this worst and most malicious order of Fairies, among the Border wilds.

The fairies' fatal green ?—P. 60.

As the *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason which has been, perhaps,

originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege as a reason, that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy; but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name, that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once by observing that the whipcord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour.

For thou wert christen'd man.—P. 60.

The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession:—

“ For I ride on a milk-white steed,
And aye nearest the town;
Because I was a christen'd knight,
They give me that renown.”

To the joyless Elfin bower.—P. 61.

The subjects of Fairy-land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of *crimping* system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the “Londe of Faery.” In the beautiful Fairy Romance of Orfee and Heurodiis (Orpheus and Eurydice) in the Auchinleck MS. is a striking enumeration of persons thus abstracted from middle earth.

The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain ?—P. 70.

St. John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: “It was true, we gave laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an authority.”—CLARENDON'S *History of the Rebellion*. Oxford, 1702, fol. vol. p. 183.

The harden'd flesh of mountain-deer.—P. 70.

The Scottish Highlanders in former times had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Charters, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Edward VI., was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands (*au fin fond des Sauvages*). After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish Savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any farther preparation than compressing it between two batons of wood, so as to force out the blood and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy; and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular.

Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.—P. 74.

So far, indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighbouring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the *Sassenach*, Saxons, or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach.

Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.—P. 77.

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. Early in the last century, John Gunn, a noted Cateran, or Highland robber, infested Inverness-shire, and levied *black-mail* up to the walls of the provincial capital. A garrison was then maintained in the castle of that town, and their pay (country banks being unknown) was usually transmitted in specie, under the guard of a small escort. It chanced that the officer who commanded this little party was unexpectedly obliged to halt, about thirty miles from Inverness, at a miserable inn. About nightfall, a stranger, in the Highland dress, and of very prepossessing appearance, entered the same house. Separate accommodation being impossible, the Englishman offered the newly-arrived guest a part of his supper, which was accepted with reluctance. By the conversation he found his new acquaintance knew well all the passes of the country, which induced him eagerly to request his company on the ensuing morning. He neither disguised his business and charge, nor his apprehensions of that celebrated freebooter, John Gunn. —The Highlander hesitated a moment, and then frankly consented to be his guide. Forth they set in the morning; and, in travelling through a solitary and dreary glen, the discourse again turned on John Gunn. "Would you like to see him?" said the guide; and, without waiting an answer to this alarming question, he whistled, and the English officer, with his small party, were surrounded by a body of Highlanders, whose numbers put resistance out of question, and who were all well armed. "Stranger," resumed the guide, "I am that very John Gunn by whom you feared to be intercepted, and not without cause: for I came to the inn last night with the express purpose of learning your route, that I and my followers might ease you of your charge by the road. But I am incapable of betraying the trust you reposed in me, and having convinced you that you were in my power, I can only dismiss you unplundered and uninjured." He then gave the officer directions for his journey, and disappeared with his party as suddenly as they had presented themselves.

On Bochastle the mouldering lines.—P. 77.

The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and indeed on the plain itself, are some intrenchments, which have been thought Roman. There is, adjacent to Callender, a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp.

*See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand.*—P. 77.

The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in former combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise. In that desperate combat which was fought between Quelus, a minion of Henry III. of France, and Antraguët, with two seconds on each side, from which only two persons escaped alive, Quelus complained that his antagonist had over him the advantage of a poinard which he used in parrying, while his left hand, which he was forced to employ for the same purpose, was cruelly mangled. When he charged Antraguët with this odds, "Thou hast done wrong," answered he, "to forget thy dagger at home. We are here to fight, and not to settle punctilios of arms."

On the field his targe he threw.—P. 79.

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broad-sword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front rank of the clans were thus armed: and Captain Grose informs us that, in 1747, the privates of the 42nd regiment, then in Flanders, were, for the most part, permitted to carry targets.—*Military Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 164.

*And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound.*—P. 82.

An eminence on the north-east of the Castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood.

The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II. stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdock Duke of Albany, Duncan Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart, were executed at Stirling, in 1425. They were beheaded upon an eminence without the castle walls, but making part of the same hill, from whence they could behold their strong castle of Doune, and their extensive possessions. This "heading hill," as it was sometimes termed, bears commonly the less terrible name of Hurly-hacket, from its having been the scene of a courtly amusement alluded to by Sir David Lindsay, who says of the pastimes in which the young king was engaged,

"Some harled him to the Hurly-hacket;"

which consisted in sliding, in some sort of chair it may be supposed, from top to bottom of a smooth bank.

The burghers hold their sports to-day.—P. 83.

Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amuse-

ments was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesley has latinised it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles. At Dumfries, a silver gun was substituted, and the contention transferred to fire-arms.

Robin Hood.—P. 84.

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the sixth Parliament of Queen Mary, c. 61, A. D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that "na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise." But in 1561, the "rascal multitude," says John Knox, "were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of many years left and damned by statute and act of Parliament; yet would they not be forbidden." Accordingly, they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592.

*Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.*—P. 84.

The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus. But the king's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglasses, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft.

*Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring.*—P. 84.

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus, in the Cokes Tale of Gamelyn, ascribed to Chaucer:

"There happed to be there beside
Tried a wrestling:
And therefore there was y-setten
A ram and als a ring."

*These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord.*—P. 91.

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the Foot-Band. The satirical poet, Sir David Lindsay (or the person who wrote the prologue to his play of the "Three Estaites,") has introduced Finlay of the Foot-Band, who, after much swaggering upon the stage,

is at length put to flight by the Fool, who terrifies him by means of a sheep's skull upon a pole. I have rather chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period, than of this Scottish Thraso. These partook of the character of the Adventurous Companions of Froissart or the Condottieri of Italy.

*Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp !
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.*—P. 92.

The jongleurs, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of Saint Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod. In Scotland, these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters, as appears from a case reported by Fountainhall:—"Reid the mountebank pursues Scott of Harden and his lady, for stealing away from him a little girl, called the tumbling-lassie, that danced upon his stage: and he claimed damages, and produced a contract, whereby he bought her from her mother for £30 Scots. But we have no slaves in Scotland, and mothers cannot sell their bairns; and physicians attested the employment of tumbling would kill her; and her joints were now grown stiff, and she declined to return; though she was at least a 'prentice, and so could not run away from her master: yet some cited Moses's law, that if a servant shelter himself with thee, against his master's cruelty, thou shalt surely not deliver him up. The Lords, *renitente cancellario*, assoilzie. Harden, on the 27th of January (1687)."—FOUNTAINHALL'S *Decisions*, vol. i. p. 439.

The facetious qualities of the ape soon rendered him an acceptable addition to the strolling band of the jongleur.

O'er Dermid's race our victory.—P. 97.

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their deathbed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr. Riddel of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the "Dandling of the Bairns," for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous freebooter, that he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's Rant, while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. A similar story is recounted of a Welsh bard, who composed and played on his deathbed the air called *Dafydddy Garregg Wen*.

Battle of Beal' an Duine.—P. 98.

A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

"In this roughly-wooded island, the country people secreted their wives and children, and their most valuable effects, from the rapacity of Cromwell's soldiers, during their inroad into this country, in the time of the republic. These invaders, not venturing to ascend by the ladders, along the side of the lake, look a more circuitous road, through the heart of the Trosachs, the most frequented path at that time, which penetrates the wilderness about half way between Binean and the lake, by a tract called Yea-chilleach, or the Old Wife's Bog.

"In one of the defiles of this by-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy, and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to that pass. In revenge of this insult, the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, to violate the women, and put the children to death. With this brutal intention, one of the party, more expert than the rest, swam towards the island, to fetch the boat to his comrades, which had carried the women to their asylum, and lay moored in one of the creeks. His companions stood on the shore of the mainland, in full view of all that was to pass, waiting anxiously for his return with the boat. But just as the swimmer had got to the nearest point of the island, and was laying hold of a black rock, to get on shore, a heroine, who stood on the very point where he meant to land, hastily snatching a dagger from below her apron, with one stroke severed his head from the body. His party seeing this disaster, and relinquishing all future hope of revenge or conquest, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation. This amazon's great-grandson lives at Bridge of Turk, who, besides others, attests the anecdote."—*Sketch of the Scenery near Callendar*, Stirling, 1806, p. 20. I have only to add to this account, that the heroine's name was Helen Stuart.

And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King.—P. 106.

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled, "The Gaberlunzie man," and "We'll gae nae mair a roving," are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

————— *Stirling's tower*
Of yore the name of Snowdown claims.—P. 107.

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdown. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his complaint of the Papingo:

"Adieu, fair Snawdown, with thy towers high,
Thy chapele-royal, park, and table round;
May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee.
Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
Whilk doth againe thy royal rock rebound."

Mr. Chalmers, in his late excellent edition of Sir David Lindsay's works, has refuted the chimerical derivation of Snawdown from *snedding*, or cutting. It was probably derived from the romantic legend which connected Stirling with King Arthur, to which the mention of the Round Table gives countenance. The ring within which jousts were formerly practised, in the castle park, is still called the Round Table. Snawdown is the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

*And Cattreath's glens with voice of triumph rung,
And mystic Merlin harp'd, and grey-hair'd Llywarch sung !—P. 110.*

This locality may startle those readers who do not recollect that much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the Principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England, and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattreath, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed, by the learned Dr. Leyden, to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick Forest. It is known to the English reader by the paraphrase of Gray, beginning,

“ Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright,” etc.

But it is not so generally known that the champions, mourned in this beautiful dirge, were the British inhabitants of Edinburgh, who were cut off by the Saxons of Deiria, or Northumberland, about the latter part of the sixth century.—TURNER'S *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, edition 1799, vol. i. p. 222.

—— *Minchmore's haunted spring.*—P. 110.

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the 'fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire. A copious fountain upon the ridge of Minchmore, called the Cheesewell, is supposed to be sacred to these fanciful spirits, and it was customary to propitiate them by throwing in something upon passing it. A pin was the usual oblation; and the ceremony is still sometimes practised, though rather in jest than earnest.

—— *The rude villager, his labour done,
In verse spontaneous chants some favour'd name.*—P. 111.

The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people. It is mentioned by Baretti and other travellers.

———— *Kindling at the deeds of Græme.*—P. 111.

Over a name sacred for ages to heroic verse, a poet may be allowed to exercise some power. I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprise the Southern reader of its legitimate sound;—Grahame being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a disyllable.

*What ! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
To wear in shrift and prayer the night away ?
And are his hours in such dull penance past,
For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay ?—P. 112.*

Almost all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, ascribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors, Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's prin-

cial lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, Count Julian forgot the duties of a Christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the Caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors. Voltaire, in his *General History*, expresses his doubts of this popular story, and Gibbon gives him some countenance; but the universal tradition is quite sufficient for the purposes of poetry. The Spaniards, in detestation of Florinda's memory, are said, by Cervantes, never to bestow that name upon any human female, reserving it for their dogs. Nor is the tradition less inveterate among the Moors, since the same author mentions a promontory on the coast of Barbary, called "The Cape of the Caba Rumia, which, in our tongue, is the Cape of the Wicked Christian Woman; and it is a tradition among the Moors, that Caba, the daughter of Count Julian, who was the cause of the loss of Spain, lies buried there, and they think it ominous to be forced into that bay; for they never go in otherwise than by necessity."

His nation's future fate a Spanish King shall see.—P. 114.

The transition of an incident from history to tradition, and from tradition to fable and romance, becoming more marvellous at each step from its original simplicity, is not ill exemplified in the account of the "Fated Chamber" of Don Roderick, as given by his namesake, the historian of Toledo, contrasted with subsequent and more romantic accounts of the same subterranean discovery. . . .

But, about the term of the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, we find, in the *Historia Verdadera del Rey Don Rodrigo*, a (pretended) translation from the Arabic of the sage Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique, a legend which puts to shame the modesty of the historian Roderick, with his chest and prophetic picture. The custom of ascribing a pretended Moorish original to these legendary histories, is ridiculed by Cervantes, who affects to translate the History of the Knight of the Woful Figure, from the Arabic of the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli.

The Tecbir war-cry and the Lelie's yell.—P. 116.

The Tecbir (derived from the words *Alla acbar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens. It is celebrated by Hughes in the Siege of Damascus:—

"We heard the Tecbir; so these Arabs call
Their shout of onset, when, with loud appeal,
They challenge Heaven, as if demanding conquest."

The *Lelie*, well known to the Christians during the crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahomedan confession of faith. It is twice used in poetry by my friend Mr. W. Stewart Rose, in the romance of Partenopex, and in the Crusade of St. Lewis.

*By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians yield!—
Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—
Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!*—P. 116.

Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, Archbishop of Toledo, invited, in 713, the Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif, who bequeathed the well-known name of

Gibraltar (*Gibel al Tarik*, or the mountain of Tarik) to the place of his landing. He was joined by Count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714, they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army, to give them battle.

Orelia, the courser of Don Roderick, was celebrated for her speed and form. She is mentioned repeatedly in Spanish romance, and also by Cervantes.

*When for the light bolero ready stand,
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met.*—P. 119.

The bolero is a very light and active dance, much practised by the Spaniards, in which castanets are always used. *Mozo* and *muchacha* are equivalent to our phrase of lad and lass.

While trumpets rang, and heralds cried " Castile ! "—P. 122.

The heralds, at the coronation of a Spanish monarch, proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word *Castilla*, *Castilla*, *Castilla*; which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Bonaparte.

High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide.—P. 123.

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders,—those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted warfare in the Peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroical Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months.

They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.—P. 124.

The interesting account of Mr. Vaughan has made most readers acquainted with the first siege of Zaragoza.¹ The last and fatal siege of that gallant and devoted city is detailed with great eloquence and precision in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1809,—a work in which the affairs of Spain have been treated of with attention corresponding to their deep interest, and to the peculiar sources of information open to the historian.

The Vault of Destiny.—P. 126.

Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed, that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled, *La Virgin del Sagrario*. The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Recisundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man,

¹ See *Narrative of the Siege of Zaragoza*, by Richard Charles Vaughan, Esq., 1809. The Right Honourable R. C. Vaughan is now British Minister at Washington. 1833.

and defies the king to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The king accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the Genie to inform Recisundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the Christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Recisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play, we are informed that Don Roderick had removed the barrier, and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprised by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.—P. 127.

I have ventured to apply to the movements of the French army that sublime passage in the prophecies of Joel, which seems applicable to them in more respects than that I have adopted in the text. One would think their ravages, their military appointments, the terror which they spread among invaded nations, their military discipline, their arts of political intrigue and deceit, were distinctly pointed out in the following verses of Scripture:—

"2. A day of darknesse and of gloominesse, a day of clouds and of thick darknesse, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the yeares of many generations. 3. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behinde them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them. 4. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses and as horsemen, so shall they runne. 5. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains, shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battel array. 6. Before their face shall the people be much pained; all faces shall gather blacknesse. 7. They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of warre, and they shall march every one in his wayes, and they shall not break their ranks. 8. Neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. 9. They shall run to and fro in the citie; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climbe up upon the houses: they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. 10. The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sunne and the moon shall be dark, and the starres shall withdraw their shining."

In verse 20th also, which announces the retreat of the northern army, described in such dreadful colours, into a "land barren and desolate," and the dishonour with which God afflicted them for having "magnified themselves to do great things," there are particulars not inapplicable to the retreat of Massena;—Divine Providence having, in all ages, attached disgrace as the natural punishment of cruelty and presumption.

*The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn.—P. 128.*

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810-11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect,

must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, etc., of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery: rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Massena, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity, and in many instances, when reduced themselves to short allowance, from having out-marched their supplies, they shared their pittance with the starving inhabitants, who had ventured back to view the ruins of their habitations, burnt by the retreating enemy, and to bury the bodies of their relations whom they had butchered. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence, that those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it?—It is not the least of Lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

Vain-glorious fugitive !—P. 128.

The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfarronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps on themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March 1811, their rear-guard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry, (who were indeed many miles in the rear,) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed "God save the King." Their minstrelsy was, however, deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was sudden, and the rout complete; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

*Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain !—P. 129.*

In the severe action of Fuentes d'Honoro, upon 5th May, 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in nowise checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsay (let me be permitted to name a gallant countryman), who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, sabre-in-hand. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into dragoons, contributed greatly

to the defeat of the enemy already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons; and the appearance of some small reinforcements, notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout. A colonel or major of their cavalry, and many prisoners (almost all intoxicated), remained in our possession. Those who consider for a moment the difference of the services, and how much an artilleryman is necessarily and naturally led to identify his own safety and utility with abiding by the tremendous implement of war, to the exercise of which he is chiefly, if not exclusively, trained, will know how to estimate the presence of mind which commanded so bold a manœuvre, and the steadiness and confidence with which it was executed.

*And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given.*—P. 129.

The gallant Colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d'Honoro. He fell at the head of his native Highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged, with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at Colonel Cameron was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious Highlanders, who, under the command of Colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet. Massena pays my countrymen a singular compliment in his account of the attack and defence of this village, in which he says the British lost many officers, *and Scotch*.

O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays.—P. 129.

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems, to a distinct observer, more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of Field-Marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline. In exposing his military reputation to the censure of imprudence from the most moderate, and all manner of unutterable calumnies from the ignorant and malignant, he placed at stake the dearest pledge which a military man had to offer, and nothing but the deepest conviction of the high and essential importance attached to success can be supposed an adequate motive. How great the chance of miscarriage was supposed, may be estimated from the general opinion of officers of unquestioned talents and experience, possessed of every opportunity of information; how completely the experiment has succeeded, and how much the spirit and patriotism of our ancient allies had been underrated, is evident, not only from those victories in which they have borne a distinguished share, but from the liberal and highly honourable manner in which these opinions have been retracted. The success of this plan, with all its important consequences, we owe to the indefatigable exertions of Field-Marshal Beresford.

*—a race renown'd of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell.*

— the conquering shout of Græme.—P. 130.

This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Græme, or Grahame. They are said, by tradition, to have descended

from the Scottish chief, under whose command his countrymen stormed the wall built by the Emperor Severus between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, the fragments of which are still popularly called Græme's Dyke. Sir John the Græme, "the hardy, wight, and wise," is well known as the friend of Sir William Wallace. Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibbermuir, were scenes of the victories of the heroic Marquis of Montrose. The pass of Killycrankie is famous for the action between King William's forces and the Highlanders in 1689,

"Where glad Dundee in faint huzzas expired."

It is seldom that one line can number so many heroes, and yet more rare when it can appeal to the glory of a living descendant in support of its ancient renown.

The allusions to the private history and character of General Grahame may be illustrated by referring to the eloquent and affecting speech of Mr. Sheridan, upon the vote of thanks to the Victor of Barosa.

ROKEBY

On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream, etc.—P. 131.

"Barnard Castle," saith old Leland, "standeth stately upon Tees." It is founded upon a very high bank, and its ruins impend over the river, including within the area a circuit of six acres and upwards. This once magnificent fortress derives its name from its founder, Barnard Baliol, the ancestor of the short and unfortunate dynasty of that name, which succeeded to the Scottish throne under the patronage of Edward I. and Edward III. Baliol's Tower, afterwards mentioned in the poem, is a round tower of great size, situated at the western extremity of the building. It bears marks of great antiquity, and was remarkable for the curious construction of its vaulted roof, which has been lately greatly injured by the operations of some persons, to whom the tower has been leased for the purpose of making patent shot! The prospect from the top of Baliol's Tower commands a rich and magnificent view of the wooded valley of the Tees.

—no human ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank.—P. 133.

I have had occasion to remark, in real life, the effect of keen and fervent anxiety in giving acuteness to the organs of sense. My gifted friend, Miss Joanna Baillie, whose dramatic works display such intimate acquaintance with the operations of human passion, has not omitted this remarkable circumstance:—

"*De Montfort.* (Off his guard.) 'Tis Rezenvelt: I heard his well-known foot,
From the first staircase mounting step by step.

Freb. How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!
I heard him not. (*De Montfort looks embarrassed, and is silent.*)"

*And the buff-coat, in ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.*—P. 133.

The use of complete suits of armour was fallen into disuse during the Civil War, though they were still worn by leaders of rank and

importance. "In the reign of King James I.," says our military antiquary, "no great alterations were made in the article of defensive armour, except that the buff-coat, or jerkin, which was originally worn under the cuirass, now became frequently a substitute for it, it having been found that a good buff leather would of itself resist the stroke of a sword; this, however, only occasionally took place among the light-armed cavalry and infantry, complete suits of armour being still used among the heavy horse. Buff-coats continued to be worn by the city trained-bands till within the memory of persons now living, so that defensive armour may, in some measure, be said to have terminated in the same materials with which it began, that is, the skins of animals, or leather."—GROSE'S *Military Antiquities*. Lond. 1801, 4to, vol. ii. p. 323.

Of the buff-coats, which were worn over the corslets, several are yet preserved; and Captain Grose has given an engraving of one which was used in the time of Charles I. by Sir Francis Rhodes, Bart. of Balbrough-Hall, Derbyshire. They were usually lined with silk or linen, secured before by buttons, or by a lace, and often richly decorated with gold or silver embroidery.

*Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow.*—P. 134.

In this character, I have attempted to sketch one of those West Indian adventurers, who, during the course of the seventeenth century, were popularly known by the name of Bucaniers. The successes of the English in the predatory incursions upon Spanish America, during the reign of Elizabeth, had never been forgotten; and, from that period downward, the exploits of Drake and Raleigh were imitated, upon a smaller scale indeed, but with equally desperate valour, by small bands of pirates, gathered from all nations, but chiefly French and English. For farther particulars concerning these extraordinary banditti, the reader may consult Raynal, or the common and popular book called the *History of the Bucaniers*.

*With his barb'd horse, fresh tidings say,
Stout Cromwell has redeem'd the day.*—P. 140.

Cromwell, with his regiment of cuirassiers, had a principal share in turning the fate of the day at Marston Moor; which was equally matter of triumph to the Independents, and of grief and heart-burning to the Presbyterians and to the Scottish. Principal Baillie expresses his dissatisfaction as follows:—

"The Independents sent up one quickly to assure that all the glory of that night was theirs; and they and their Major-General Cromwell had done it all there alone: but Captain Stuart afterward showed the vanity and falsehood of their disgraceful relation. God gave us that victory wonderfully. There were three generals on each side, Lesley, Fairfax, and Manchester; Rupert, Newcastle, and King. Within half an hour and less, all six took them to their heels;—this to you alone. The disadvantage of the ground, and violence of the flower of Prince Rupert's horse, carried all our right wing down; only Eglinton kept ground to his great loss; his lieutenant-crowner, a brave man, I fear shall die, and his son Robert be mutilated of an arm. Lindsay had the greatest hazard of any; but the beginning of the victory was from David Lesley, who before was much suspected of evil designs: he, with the Scots and Cromwell's horse, having the advantage of the ground, did dissipate all before them."—BAILLIE'S *Letters and Journals*. Edin. 1785, 8vo, ii. 36.

Of Percy Rede the tragic song.—P. 141.

In a poem, entitled "The Lay of the Redewater Minstrel," Newcastle, 1809, this tale, with many others peculiar to the valley of the Reed, is commemorated:—"The particulars of the traditional story of Percy Reed of Troughend, and the Halls of Girsolfeld, the author had from a descendant of the family of Reed. From his account, it appears that Percival Reed, Esquire, a keeper of Reedsdale, was betrayed by the Halls (hence denominated the false-hearted Ha's) to a band of moss-troopers of the name of Crosier, who slew him at Batinghope, near the source of the Reed.

"The Halls were, after the murder of Percy Reed, held in such universal abhorrence and contempt by the inhabitants of Reedsdale, for their cowardly and treacherous behaviour, that they were obliged to leave the country." In another passage, we are informed that the ghost of the injured Borderer is supposed to haunt the banks of a brook called the Pringle. These Redes of Troughend were a very ancient family, as may be conjectured from their deriving their surname from the river on which they had their mansion. An epitaph on one of their tombs affirms, that the family held their lands of Troughend, which are situated on the Reed, nearly opposite to Otterburn, for the incredible space of nine hundred years.

The moated mound of Risingham.—P. 141.

Risingham, upon the river Reed, near the beautiful hamlet of Woodburn, is an ancient Roman station, formerly called *Habitancum*. Camden says, that in his time the popular account bore, that it had been the abode of a deity, or giant, called Magon; and appeals, in support of this tradition, as well as to the etymology of Risingham, or Reisenham, which signifies, in German, the habitation of the giants, to two Roman altars taken out of the river, inscribed, *DEO MOGONTI CADENORUM*. About half a mile distant from Risingham, upon an eminence covered with scattered birch-trees and fragments of rock, there is cut upon a large rock, in *alto relievo*, a remarkable figure, called Robin of Risingham, or Robin of Reedsdale. It presents a hunter, with his bow raised in one hand, and in the other what seems to be a hare. There is a quiver at the back of the figure, and he is dressed in a long coat, or kirtle, coming down to the knees, and meeting close, with a girdle bound round him. . . . The popular tradition is, that it represents a giant, whose brother resided at Woodburn, and he himself at Risingham. It adds, that they subsisted by hunting, and that one of them, finding the game become too scarce to support them, poisoned his companion, in whose memory the monument was engraved. What strange and tragic circumstance may be concealed under this legend, or whether it is utterly apocryphal, it is now impossible to discover.

The name of Robin of Redesdale was given to one of the Umfravilles, Lords of Prudhoe, and afterwards to one Hilliard, a friend and follower of the king-making Earl of Warwick. This person commanded an army of Northamptonshire and northern men, who seized on and beheaded the Earl Rivers, father to Edward the Fourth's queen, and his son, Sir John Woodville. See HOLINSHED, *ad annum*, 1469.

— *Do thou revere*

The statutes of the Bucanier.—P. 141.

The "statutes of the Bucaniers" were, in reality, more equitable than could have been expected from the state of society under which they had been formed. They chiefly related, as may readily be conjectured, to the distribution and the inheritance of their plunder.

When the expedition was completed, the fund of prize-money acquired was thrown together, each party taking his oath that he had retained or concealed no part of the common stock. If any one transgressed in this important particular, the punishment was, his being set ashore on some desert key or island, to shift for himself as he could. The owners of the vessel had then their share assigned for the expenses of the outfit. These were generally old pirates, settled at Tobago, Jamaica, St. Domingo, or some other French or English settlement. The surgeon's and carpenter's salaries, with the price of provisions and ammunition, were also defrayed. Then followed the compensation due to the maimed and wounded, rated according to the damage they had sustained; as six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves, for the loss of an arm or leg, and so in proportion.

"After this act of justice and humanity, the remainder of the booty was divided into as many shares as there were Bucaniers. The commander could only lay claim to a single share, as the rest; but they complimented him with two or three, in proportion as he had acquitted himself to their satisfaction. When the vessel was not the property of the whole company, the person who had fitted it out, and furnished it with necessary arms and ammunition, was entitled to a third of all the prizes. Favour had never any influence in the division of the booty, for every share was determined by lot. Instances of such rigid justice as this are not easily met with, and they extended even to the dead. Their share was given to the man who was known to be their companion when alive, and therefore their heir. If the person who had been killed had no intimate, his part was sent to his relations, when they were known. If there were no friends nor relations, it was distributed in charity to the poor and to churches, which were to pray for the person in whose name these benefactions were given, the fruits of inhuman, but necessary piratical plunders."—RAYNAL'S *History of European Settlements in the East and West Indies*, by Justamond. Lond. 1776, 8vo, iii. p. 41.

The course of Tees.—P. 148.

The view from Barnard Castle commands the rich and magnificent valley of Tees. Immediately adjacent to the river, the banks are very thickly wooded; at a little distance they are more open and cultivated; but, being interspersed with hedge-rows, and with isolated trees of great size and age, they still retain the richness of woodland scenery. The river itself flows in a deep trench of solid rock, chiefly limestone and marble. The finest view of its romantic course is from a handsome modern-built bridge over the Tees, by the late Mr. Morritt of Rokeby. In Leland's time, the marble quarries seem to have been of some value. "Hard under the cliff by Egliston, is found on each side of Tees very fair marble, wont to be taken up both by marblers of Barnard Castle and of Egliston, and partly to have been wrought by them, and partly sold onwrought to others."—*Itinerary*. Oxford, 1768, 8vo, p. 88.

Egliston's grey ruins.—P. 150.

The ruins of this abbey, or priory (for Tanner calls it the former, and Leland the latter), are beautifully situated upon the angle, formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees. A good part of the religious house is still in some degree habitable, but the church is in ruins. Egliston was dedicated to St. Mary and St. John the Baptist, and is supposed to have been founded by Ralph de Multon about the end of Henry the Second's reign. There were formerly the tombs of the families of Rokeby, Bowes, and Fitz-Hugh.

—the mound,
*Raised by that Legion long renown'd,
 Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
 Of pious, faithful, conquering fame.*—P. 150.

Close behind the George Inn at Greta Bridge, there is a well-preserved Roman encampment, surrounded with a triple ditch, lying between the river Greta and a brook called the Tutta. The four entrances are easily to be discerned. Very many Roman altars and monuments have been found in the vicinity, most of which are preserved at Rokeby by my friend Mr. Morritt. Among others is a small votive altar, with the inscription, *LEG. VI. VIC. P. F. F.*, which has been rendered, *Legio. Sexta. Victrix. Pia. Fortis. Fidelis.*

Rokeby's turrets high.—P. 150.

This ancient manor long gave name to a family by whom it is said to have been possessed from the Conquest downward, and who are at different times distinguished in history. It was the Baron of Rokeby who finally defeated the insurrection of the Earl of Northumberland, *tempore Hen. IV.* The Rokeby, or Rokesby family, continued to be distinguished until the great Civil War, when, having embraced the cause of Charles I., they suffered severely by fines and confiscations. The estate then passed from its ancient possessors to the family of the Robinsons, from whom it was purchased by the father of my valued friend, the present proprietor.

A stern and lone, yet lovely road.—P. 151.

What follows is an attempt to describe the romantic glen, or rather ravine, through which the Greta finds a passage between Rokeby and Mortham; the former situated upon the left bank of Greta, the latter on the right bank, about half a mile nearer to its junction with the Tees. The river runs with very great rapidity over a bed of solid rock, broken by many shelving descents, down which the stream dashes with great noise and impetuosity, vindicating its etymology, which has been derived from the Gothic, *Gridan*, to clamour. The banks partake of the same wild and romantic character, being chiefly lofty cliffs of limestone rock, whose grey colour contrasts admirably with the various trees and shrubs which find root among their crevices, as well as with the hue of the ivy, which clings around them in profusion, and hangs down from their projections in long sweeping tendrils. At other points the rocks give place to precipitous banks of earth, bearing large trees intermixed with copsewood. In one spot the dell, which is elsewhere very narrow, widens for a space to leave room for a dark grove of yew trees, intermixed here and there with aged pines of uncommon size. Directly opposite to this sombre thicket, the cliffs on the other side of the Greta are tall, white, and fringed with all kinds of deciduous shrubs. The whole scenery of this spot is so much adapted to the ideas of superstition, that it has acquired the name of Blockula, from the place where the Swedish witches were supposed to hold their Sabbath. The dell, however, has superstitions of its own growth, for it is supposed to be haunted by a female spectre, called the Dobie of Mortham. The cause assigned for her appearance is a lady's having been whilom murdered in the wood, in evidence of which, her blood is shown upon the stairs of the old tower at Mortham. But whether she was slain by a jealous husband, or by savage banditti, or by an uncle who coveted her estate, or by a rejected lover, are points upon which the traditions of Rokeby do not enable us to decide.

How whistle rash bids tempests roar.—P. 153.

That this is a general superstition, is well known to all who have been on ship-board, or who have conversed with seamen. The most formidable whistler that I remember to have met with was the apparition of a certain Mrs. Leakey, who, about 1636, resided, we are told, at Mynehead, in Somerset, where her only son drove a considerable trade between that port and Waterford, and was owner of several vessels. This old gentlewoman was of a social disposition, and so acceptable to her friends, that they used to say to her and to each other, it were pity such an excellent good-natured old lady should die; to which she was wont to reply, that whatever pleasure they might find in her company just now, they would not greatly like to see or converse with her after death, which nevertheless she was apt to think might happen. Accordingly, after her death and funeral, she began to appear to various persons by night and by noonday, in her own house, in the town and fields, at sea and upon shore. So far had she departed from her former urbanity, that she is recorded to have kicked a doctor of medicine for his impolite negligence in omitting to hand her over a stile. It was also her humour to appear upon the quay, and call for a boat. But especially so soon as any of her son's ships approached the harbour, "this ghost would appear in the same garb and likeness as when she was alive, and, standing at the mainmast, would blow with a whistle, and though it were never so great a calm, yet immediately there would arise a most dreadful storm, that would break, wreck, and drown ship and goods." When she had thus proceeded until her son had neither credit to freight a vessel, nor could have procured men to sail in it, she began to attack the persons of his family, and actually strangled their only child in the cradle. The rest of her story, showing how the spectre looked over the shoulder of her daughter-in-law while dressing her hair at a looking-glass, and how Mrs. Leakey the younger took courage to address her, and how the beldam despatched her to an Irish prelate, famous for his crimes and misfortunes, to exhort him to repentance, and to apprise him that otherwise he would be hanged, and how the bishop was satisfied with replying, that if he was born to be hanged, he should not be drowned;—all these, with many more particulars, may be found at the end of one of John Dunton's publications, called *Athenianism*, London, 1710, where the tale is engrossed under the title of *The Apparition Evidence*.

Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light.—P. 153.

"This Ericus, King of Sweden, in his time was held second to none in the magical art; and he was so familiar with the evil spirits, which he exceedingly adored, that which way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way. From this occasion he was called Windy Cap; and many men believed that Regnerus, King of Denmark, by the conduct of this Ericus, who was his nephew, did happily extend his piracy into the most remote parts of the earth, and conquered many countries and fenced cities by his cunning, and at last was his coadjutor; that by the consent of the nobles, he should be chosen King of Sweden, which continued a long time with him very happily, until he died of old age."—OLAUS, *ut supra*, p. 45.

The Demon Frigate.—P. 153.

This is an allusion to a well-known nautical superstition concerning a fantastic vessel, called by sailors the Flying Dutchman, and supposed to be seen about the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. She is distinguished from earthly vessels by bearing a press of sail when all others

are unable, from stress of weather, to show an inch of canvas. The cause of her wandering is not altogether certain; but the general account is, that she was originally a vessel loaded with great wealth, on board of which some horrid act of murder and piracy had been committed; that the plague broke out among the wicked crew who had perpetrated the crime, and that they sailed in vain from port to port, offering, as the price of shelter, the whole of their ill-gotten wealth; that they were excluded from every harbour, for fear of the contagion which was devouring them; and that, as a punishment of their crimes, the apparition of the ship still continues to haunt those seas in which the catastrophe took place, and is considered by the mariners as the worst of all possible omens.

— By some desert isle or key.—P. 154.

What contributed much to the security of the Bucaniers about the Windward Islands, was the great number of little islets, called in that country *keys*. These are small sandy patches, appearing just above the surface of the ocean, covered only with a few bushes and weeds, but sometimes affording springs of water, and, in general, much frequented by turtle. Such little uninhabited spots afforded the pirates good harbours, either for refitting or for the purpose of ambush; they were occasionally the hiding-place of their treasure, and often afforded a shelter to themselves. As many of the atrocities which they practised on their prisoners were committed in such spots, there are some of these keys which even now have an indifferent reputation among seamen, and where they are with difficulty prevailed on to remain ashore at night, on account of the visionary terrors incident to places which have been thus contaminated.

Before the gate of Mortham stood.—P. 156.

The castle of Mortham, which Leland terms "Mr. Rokesby's Place, in *ripa citer*, scant a quarter of a mile from Greta Bridge, and not a quarter of a mile beneath into Tees," is a picturesque tower, surrounded by buildings of different ages, now converted into a farm-house and offices. The battlements of the tower itself are singularly elegant, the architect having broken them at regular intervals into different heights; while those at the corners of the tower project into octangular turrets. They are also from space to space covered with stones laid across them, as in modern embrasures, the whole forming an uncommon and beautiful effect. The surrounding buildings are of a less happy form, being pointed into high and steep roofs. A wall, with embrasures, encloses the southern front, where a low portal arch affords an entry to what was the castle-court. At some distance is most happily placed, between the stems of two magnificent elms, the monument alluded to in the text. It is said to have been brought from the ruins of Egliston Priory, and, from the armoury with which it is richly carved, appears to have been a tomb of the Fitz-Hughs.

The situation of Mortham is eminently beautiful, occupying a high bank, at the bottom of which the Greta winds out of the dark, narrow, and romantic dell, which the text has attempted to describe, and flows onward through a more open valley to meet the Tees about a quarter of a mile from the castle. Mortham is surrounded by old trees, happily and widely grouped with Mr. Morritt's new plantations.

And bid the dead your treasure keep.—P. 157.

If time did not permit the Bucaniers to lavish away their plunder in their usual debaucheries, they were wont to hide it, with many superstitious solemnities, in the desert islands and keys which they fre-

quented, and where much treasure, whose lawless owners perished without reclaiming it, is still supposed to be concealed. The most cruel of mankind are often the most superstitious; and these pirates are said to have had recourse to a horrid ritual, in order to secure an unearthly guardian to their treasures. They killed a Negro or Spaniard and buried him with the treasure, believing that his spirit would haunt the spot, and terrify away all intruders. I cannot produce any other authority on which this custom is ascribed to them than that of maritime tradition, which is, however, amply sufficient for the purposes of poetry.

— *Brackenbury's dismal tower.*—P. 161.

This tower has been already mentioned. It is situated near the north-eastern extremity of the wall which encloses Barnard Castle, and is traditionally said to have been the prison. By an odd coincidence, it bears a name which we naturally connect with imprisonment, from its being that of Sir Robert Brackenbury, lieutenant of the Tower of London under Edward IV. and Richard III. There is, indeed, some reason to conclude, that the tower may actually have derived the name from that family, for Sir Robert Brackenbury himself possessed considerable property not far from Barnard Castle.

*Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee !*—P. 163.

After the battle of Marston Moor, the Earl of Newcastle retired beyond sea in disgust, and many of his followers laid down their arms, and made the best composition they could with the Committees of Parliament. Fines were imposed upon them in proportion to their estates and degrees of delinquency, and these fines were often bestowed upon such persons as had deserved well of the Commons. In some circumstances it happened, that the oppressed cavaliers were fain to form family alliances with some powerful person among the triumphant party. The whole of Sir Robert Howard's excellent comedy of *The Committee* turns upon the plot of Mr. and Mrs. Day to enrich their family, by compelling Arabella, whose estate was under sequestration, to marry their son Abel, as the price by which she was to compound with Parliament for delinquency; that is, for attachment to the royal cause.

*In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
When Rookan-edge, and Redswair high,
To bugle rung and blood-hound's cry.*—P. 164.

“What manner of cattle-stealers they are that inhabit these valleys in the marches of both kingdoms, John Lesley, a Scotche man himself, and Bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out of their own borders in the night, in troops, through unfrequented by-ways and many intricate windings. All the day-time they refresh themselves and their horses in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark in those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they, in like manner, return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices, in the thickest mists, his reputation is the greater, and he is looked upon as a man of an excellent head. And they are so very cunning, that they seldom have their booty taken from them, unless sometimes when, by the help of bloodhounds following them exactly upon the tract, they may chance to fall into the hands

of their adversaries. When being taken, they have so much persuasive eloquence, and so many smooth insinuating words at command, that if they do not move their judges, nay, and even their adversaries (notwithstanding the severity of their natures), to have mercy, yet they incite them to admiration and compassion."—CAMDEN'S *Britannia*.

The inhabitants of the valleys of Tyne and Reed were, in ancient times, so inordinately addicted to these depredations, that in 1564, the Incorporated Merchant-adventurers of Newcastle made a law that none born in these districts should be admitted apprentice. The inhabitants are stated to be so generally addicted to rapine, that no faith should be reposed in those proceeding from "such lewde and wicked progenitors." This regulation continued to stand unrepealed until 1771. A beggar, in an old play, describes himself as "born in Redesdale, in Northumberland, and come of a wight-riding surname, called the Robsons, good honest men and true, *saving a little shifting for their living, God help them!*"—a description which would have applied to most Borderers on both sides.

Reidswair, famed for a skirmish to which it gives name, [see *Border Minstrelsy*, vol. ii. p. 15], is on the very edge of the Carter-fell, which divides England from Scotland. The Rookan is a place upon Reed-water. Bertram, being described as a native of these dales, where the habits of hostile depredation long survived the union of the crowns, may have been, in some degree, prepared by education for the exercise of a similar trade in the wars of the Bucaniers.

*Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.*—P. 165.

After one of the recent battles, in which the Irish rebels were defeated, one of their most active leaders was found in a bog, in which he was immersed up to the shoulders, while his head was concealed by an impending ledge of turf. Being detected and seized, notwithstanding his precaution, he became solicitous to know how his retreat had been discovered. "I caught," answered the Sutherland Highlander, by whom he was taken, "the sparkle of your eye." Those who are accustomed to mark hares upon their form usually discover them by the same circumstance.

*Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
His soul's redemption for revenge!*—P. 168.

It is agreed by all the writers upon magic and witchcraft that revenge was the most common motive for the pretended compact between Satan and his vassals. The ingenuity of Reginald Scot has very happily stated how such an opinion came to root itself, not only in the minds of the public and of the judges, but even in that of the poor wretches themselves who were accused of sorcery, and were often firm believers in their own power and their own guilt.

"One sort of such as are said to be witches, are women which be commonly old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, foul, and full of wrinkles; poor, sullen, superstitious, or papists, or such as know no religion; in whose drowsie minds the devil hath gotten a fine seat; so as what mischief, mischance, calamity, or slaughter is brought to pass, they are easily perswaded the same is done by themselves, imprinting in their minds an earnest and constant imagination thereof. . . . These go from house to house, and from door to door, for a pot of milk, yest, drink, pottage, or some such relief, without the which they could hardly live; neither obtaining for their service or pains, nor yet by their art, nor yet at the devil's hands (with whom they are said to make a perfect

and visible bargain), either beauty, money, promotion, wealth, pleasure, honour, knowledge, learning, or any other benefit whatsoever.

"It falleth out many a time, that neither their necessities nor their expectation is answered or served in those places where they beg or borrow, but rather their lewdness is by their neighbours reprov'd. And farther, in tract of time the witch waxeth odious and tedious to her neighbours, and they again are despised and despited of her; so as sometimes she curseth one, and sometimes another, and that from the master of the house, his wife, children, cattle, etc., to the little pig that lieth in the stie. Thus, in process of time, they have all displeased her, and she hath wished evil luck unto them all; perhaps with curses and imprecations made in form. Doubtless (at length) some of her neighbours die or fall sick, or some of their children are visited with diseases that vex them strangely, as apoplexies, epilepsies, convulsions, hot fevers, worms, etc., which, by ignorant parents, are supposed to be the vengeance of witches. . . .

"The witch, on the other side, expecting her neighbours' mischances, and seeing things sometimes come to pass according to her wishes, curses, and incantations (for Bodin himself confesses, that not above two in a hundred of their witchings or wishings take effect), being called before a justice, by due examination of the circumstances, is driven to see her imprecations and desires, and her neighbours' harms and losses, to concur, and, as it were, to take effect; and so confesseth that she (as a goddess) hath brought such things to pass. Wherein not only she, but the accuser, and also the justice, are foully deceived and abused, as being, through her confession, and other circumstances, perswaded (to the injury of God's glory) that she hath done, or can do, that which is proper only to God himself."—Scor's *Discovery of Witchcraft*. Lond. 1655, fol. p. 4, 5.

*Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.*—P. 169.

The troops of the King, when they first took the field, were as well disciplined as could be expected from circumstances. But as the circumstances of Charles became less favourable, and his funds for regularly paying his forces decreased, habits of military licence prevailed among them in greater excess. Lacy the player, who served his master during the Civil War, brought out, after the Restoration, a piece called *The Old Troop*, in which he seems to have commemorated some real incidents which occurred in his military career. The names of the officers of the Troop sufficiently express their habits. We have *Flea-flint Plunder-Master-General*, *Captain Ferret-farm*, and *Quarter-Master Burn-drop*. The officers of the Troop are in league with these worthies, and connive at their plundering the country for a suitable share in the booty. All this was undoubtedly drawn from the life, which Lacy had an opportunity to study. The moral of the whole is comprehended in a rebuke given to the lieutenant, whose disorders in the country are said to prejudice the King's cause more than his courage in the field could recompense. The piece is by no means void of farcical humour.

— *Brignall's woods, and Scargill's wave,
E'en now, o'er many a sister cave.*—P. 170.

The banks of the Greta, below Rutherford Bridge, abound in seams of greyish slate, which are wrought in some places to a very great depth under ground, thus forming artificial caverns, which, when the seam has been exhausted, are gradually hidden by the underwood

which grows in profusion upon the romantic banks of the river. In times of public confusion, they might be well adapted to the purposes of banditti.

When Spain waged warfare with our land.—P. 174.

There was a short war with Spain in 1625-6, which will be found to agree pretty well with the chronology of the poem. But probably Bertram held an opinion very common among the maritime heroes of the age, that "there was no peace beyond the Line." The Spanish *guarda-costas* were constantly employed in aggressions upon the trade and settlements of the English and French; and, by their own severities, gave room for the system of bucaniering, at first adopted in self-defence and retaliation, and afterwards persevered in from habit and thirst of plunder.

————— *my rangers go*
Even now to track a milk-white doe.—P. 176.

"Immediately after supper, the huntsman should go to his master's chamber, and if he serve a king, then let him go to the master of the game's chamber, to know in what quarter he determineth to hunt the day following, that he may know his own quarter; that done, he may go to bed, to the end that he may rise the earlier in the morning, according to the time and season, and according to the place where he must hunt: then when he is up and ready, let him drinke a good draught, and fetch his hound, to make him breake his fast a little: and let him not forget to fill his bottel with good wine: that done, let him take a little vinegar into the palme of his hand, and put it in the nostrils of his hound, for to make him snuffe, to the end his scent may be the perfecter, then let him go to the wood. . . . When the huntsman perceiveth that it is time to begin to beat, let him put his hound before him, and beat the outsides of springs or thickets; and if he find an hart or deer that likes him, let him mark well whether it be fresh or not, which he may know as well by the maner of his hounds drawing, as also by the eye. . . . When he hath well considered what maner of hart it may be, and hath marked every thing to judge by, then let him draw till he come to the couert where he is gone to; and let him harbour him if he can, still marking all his tokens, as well by the slot as by the entries, foyles, or such-like. That done, let him plash or bruse down small twigges, some aloft and some below, as the art requireth, and therewithall, whilest his hound is hote, let him beat the outsides, and make his ring-walkes, twice or thrice about the wood." —*The Noble Art of Venerie, or Hunting.* Lond. 1611, 4to, p. 76, 77.

Song————— *Adieu for evermore.*—P. 178.

The last verse of this song is taken from the fragment of an old Scottish ballad, of which I only recollected two verses when the first edition of *Rokeby* was published. Mr. Thomas Sheridan kindly pointed out to me an entire copy of this beautiful song, which seems to express the fortunes of some follower of the Stuart family:—

"It was a' for our rightful king
That we left fair Scotland's strand,
It was a' for our rightful king
That we e'er saw Irish land,
My dear,
That we e'er saw Irish land.

I held him short, and drawing after him,
 I might behold the hart was feeding trym;
 His head was high, and large in each degree,
 Well paulmed eke, and seem'd full sound to be.
 Of colour browne, he beareth eight and tenne,
 Of stately height, and long he seemed then.
 His beam seem'd great, in good proportion led,
 Well barred and round, well pearled neare his head.
 He seemed fayre tweene blacke and berrie brounde,
 He seemes well fed by all the signes I found.
 For when I had well marked him with eye,
 I stept aside, to watch where he would lye.
 And when I had so wayted full an houre,
 That he might be at layre and in his boure,
 I cast about to harbour him full sure;
 My hound by sent did me thereof assure . . .
 "Then if he ask what slot or view I found,
 I say the slot or view was long on ground;
 The toes were great, the joynt bones round and short,
 The shinne bones large, the dew-claws close in port:
 Short ioynted was he, hollow-footed eke,
 An hart to hunt as any man can seeke."

The Art of Venerie, ut supra, p. 97.

When Denmark's raven soar'd on high.—P. 180.

About the year of God 866, the Danes, under their celebrated leaders Inguar (more properly Agnar) and Hubba, sons, it is said, of the still more celebrated Regnar Lodbrog, invaded Northumberland, bringing with them the magical standard, so often mentioned in poetry, called **REAFEN**, or **Rumfan**, from its bearing the figure of a raven:—

"Wrought by the sisters of the Danish king,
 Of furious Ivar in a midnight hour:
 While the sick moon, at their enchanted song
 Wrapt in pale tempest, labour'd through the clouds,
 The demons of destruction then, they say,
 Were all abroad, and mixing with the woof
 Their baleful power: The sisters ever sung,
 ' Shake, standard, shake this ruin on our foes.' "

THOMSON and MALLET's *Alfred*.

The Danes renewed and extended their incursions, and began to colonise, establishing a kind of capital at York, from which they spread their conquests and incursions in every direction. Stanmore, which divides the mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, was probably the boundary of the Danish kingdom in that direction. The district to the west, known in ancient British history by the name of *Reged*, had never been conquered by the Saxons, and continued to maintain a precarious independence until it was ceded to Malcolm, King of Scots, by William the Conqueror, probably on account of its similarity in language and manners to the neighbouring British kingdom of Strath-Clyde.

Upon the extent and duration of the Danish sovereignty in Northumberland, the curious may consult the various authorities quoted in the *Gesta et Vestigia Danorum extra Daniam*, tom. ii. p. 40. The most powerful of their Northumbrian leaders seems to have been Ivar, called, from the extent of his conquests, *Widfam*, that is, *The Strider*.

*Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fix'd on each vale a Runic name.*—P. 180.

The heathen Danes have left several traces of their religion in the upper part of Teesdale. Balder-garth, which derives its name from the unfortunate son of Odin, is a tract of waste land on the very ridge of Stanmore; and a brook, which falls into the Tees near Barnard Castle, is named after the same deity. A field upon the banks of the Tees is also termed Woden-Croft, from the supreme deity of the Edda. Thorsgill, of which a description is attempted in stanza ii., is a beautiful little brook and dell, running up behind the ruins of Egliston Abbey. Thor was the Hercules of the Scandinavian mythology, a dreadful giant-queller, and in that capacity the champion of the gods, and the defender of Asgard, the northern Olympus, against the frequent attacks of the inhabitants of Jotunhem. There is an old poem in the Edda of Sœmund, called the Song of Thrym, which turns upon the loss and recovery of the Mace, or Hammer, which was Thor's principal weapon, and on which much of his power seems to have depended. It may be read to great advantage in a version equally spirited and literal, among the Miscellaneous Translations and Poems of the Honourable William Herbert.

*Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel?*—P. 183.

The O'Neale here meant, for more than one succeeded to the chieftainship during the reign of Elizabeth, was Hugh, the grandson of Con O'Neale, called Con Bacco, or the Lame. His father, Matthew O'Kelly, was illegitimate, and, being the son of a blacksmith's wife, was usually called Matthew the Blacksmith. His father, nevertheless, destined his succession to him; and he was created, by Elizabeth, Baron of Dungannon. Upon the death of Con Bacco, this Matthew was slain by his brother. Hugh narrowly escaped the same fate, and was protected by the English. Shane O'Neale, his uncle, called Shane Dymas, was succeeded by Turlough Lynogh O'Neale; after whose death Hugh, having assumed the chieftainship, became nearly as formidable to the English as any by whom it had been possessed. He rebelled repeatedly, and as often made submissions, of which it was usually a condition that he should not any longer assume the title of O'Neale; in lieu of which he was created Earl of Tyrone. But this condition he never observed longer than until the pressure of superior force was withdrawn. His baffling the gallant Earl of Essex in the field, and overreaching him in a treaty, was the induction to that nobleman's tragedy. Lord Mountjoy succeeded in finally subjugating O'Neale; but it was not till the succession of James, to whom he made personal submission, and was received with civility at court. Yet, according to Morrison, "no respect to him could containe many woemen in those parts, who had lost husbands and children in the Irish warres, from flinging durt and stones at the earle as he passed, and from reuiling him with bitter words; yea, when the earle had been at court, and there obtaining his majestie's direction for his pardon and performance of all conditions promised him by the Lord Mountjoy, was about September to returne, he durst not pass by those parts without direction to the shiriffes, to convey him with troops of horse from place to place, till he was safely imbarcked and put to sea for Ireland."—*Itinerary*, p. 296.

*But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died.*—P. 183.

The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English was in a battle fought near Blackwater, while he besieged a fort garrisoned by the English, which commanded the passes into his country.

" This captain and his few warders did with no less courage suffer hunger, and, having eaten the few horses they had, lived vpon hearbes growing in the ditches and wals, suffering all extremities, till the lord-lieutenant, in the moneth of August, sent Sir Henry Bagnal, marshall of Ireland, with the most choice companies of foot and horse-troopes of the English army to victual this fort, and to raise the rebels siege. When the English entered the place and thicke woods beyond Armagh, on the east side, Tyrone (with all the rebels assembled to him) pricked forward with rage, enuy, and settled rancour against the marshall, assayed the English, and turning his full force against the marshall's person, had the successe to kill him, valiantly fighting among the thickest of the rebels. Whereupon the English being dismayed with his death, the rebels obtained a great victory against them. I terme it great, since the English, from their first arriual in that kingdome, neuer had received so great an ouerthrow as this, commonly called the Defeat of Blackewater; thirteene valiant capitaines and 1500 common souldiers (whereof many were of the old companies which had serued in Brittany vnder General Norreys) were slain in the field. The yielding of the fort of Blackewater followed this disaster, when the assaulted guard saw no hope of relief; but especially vpon messages sent to Captain Williams from our broken forces, retired to Armagh, professing that all their safety depended vpon his yielding the fort into the hands of Tyrone, without which danger Captaine Williams professed that no want or miserie should have induced him thereunto."—FYNES MORYSON'S *Itinerary*, London, 1617, fol. part ii. p. 24.

Tyrone is said to have entertained a personal animosity against the knight-marshal, Sir Henry Bagnal, whom he accused of detaining the letters which he sent to Queen Elizabeth, explanatory of his conduct, and offering terms of submission. The river, called by the English, Blackwater, is termed in Irish, Avon-Duff, which has the same signification. Both names are mentioned by Spenser in his "Marriage of the Thames and the Medway." But I understand that his verses relate not to the Blackwater of Ulster, but to a river of the same name in the south of Ireland:—

" Swift Avon-Duff, which of the Englishmen
Is called Blackwater "——

The Tanist he to great O'Neale.—P. 183.

" *Eudox.* What is that which you call Tanist and Tanistry? These be names and terms never heard of nor known to us.

" *Iren.* It is a custom amongst all the Irish, that presently after the death of one of their chiefe lords or capitaines, they doe presently assemble themselves to a place generally appointed and knowne unto them, to choose another in his stead, where they do nominate and elect, for the most part not the eldest sonne, nor any of the children of the lord deceased, but the next to him in blood, that is, the eldest and worthiest, as commonly the next brother unto him, if he have any, or the next cousin, or so forth, as any is elder in that kindred or sept; and then next to them doe they choose the next of the blood to be Tanist, who shall next succeed him in the said captainry, if he live thereunto.

" *Eudox.* Do they not use any ceremony in this election, for all barbarous nations are commonly great observers of ceremonies and superstitious rites?

" *Iren.* They use to place him that shall be their capitaine vpon a stone, always reserved to that purpose, and placed commonly vpon a hill. In some of which I have seen formed and engraven a foot, which they say was the measure of their first capitaine's foot; whereon hee

standing, receives an oath to preserve all the ancient former customes of the countrey inviolable, and to deliver up the succession peaceably to his Tanist, and then hath a wand delivered unto him by some whose proper office that is; after which, descending from the stone, he turneth himself round, thrice forwards and thrice backwards.

"*Eudox.* But how is the Tanist chosen?

"*Iren.* They say he setteth but one foot upon the stone, and receiveth the like oath that the captaine did."—SPENSER'S *View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, Lond. 1805, 8vo, vol. viii. p. 306.

The Tanist, therefore, of O'Neale, was the heir-apparent of his power. This kind of succession appears also to have regulated, in very remote times, the succession to the crown of Scotland. It would have been imprudent, if not impossible, to have asserted a minor's right of succession in those stormy days, when the principles of policy were summed up in my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines:—

—— "the good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread, etc.—P. 183.

There is here an attempt to describe the ancient Irish dress, of which a poet of Queen Elizabeth's day has given us the following particulars:—

"I marvailde in my mynde,
and thereupon did muse,
To see a bride of heavenlie hewe
an ouglie fere to chuse.
This bride it is the soile,
the bridegroom is the karne.
With writhed glibbes, like wicked sprits,
with visage rough and stearne;
With sculles upon their poalles,
instead of civill cappes;
With speares in hand, and swordes besydes,
to beare off after clappes;
With jackettes long and large,
which shroud simplicitie,
Though spitfull darts which they do beare
importe iniquitie.
Their shirtes be very strange,
not reaching past the thie;
With pleates on pleates thei pleated are
as thick as pleates may lye.
Whose sleeves hang trailing doune
almost unto the shoe;
And with a mantell commonlie
the Irish karne do goe.
Now some amongst the reste
doe use another weede;
A coate I meane, of strange devise,
which fancy first did breade.
His skirts be very shorte,
with pleates set thick about,
And Irish trouzes moe to put
their strange protactours out."

DERRICK'S *Image of Ireland*, apud SOMERS' *Tracts*,
Edin. 1809, 4to, vol. i. p. 585.

Some curious wooden engravings accompany this poem, from which it would seem that the ancient Irish dress was (the bonnet excepted) very similar to that of the Scottish Highlanders. The want of a covering on the head was supplied by the mode of plaiting and arranging the hair, which was called the *glibbe*. These glibbes, according to Spenser, were fit marks for a thief, since, when he wished to disguise himself, he could either cut it off entirely, or so pull it over his eyes as to render it very hard to recognise him.

The javelins, or darts, of the Irish, which they threw with great dexterity, appear, from one of the prints already mentioned, to have been about four feet long, with a strong steel head and thick knotted shaft.

Like envoy of some barbarous throne.—P. 184.

The Irish chiefs, in their intercourse with the English, and with each other, were wont to assume the language and style of independent royalty. Morrison has preserved a summons from Tyrone to a neighbouring chieftain, which runs in the following terms:—

“ O’Neale commendeth him unto you, Morish Fitz-Thomas; O’Neale requesteth you, in God’s name, to take part with him, and fight for your conscience and right; and in so doing, O’Neale will spend to see you righted in all your affaires, and will help you. And if you come not at O’Neale betwixt this and to-morrow at twelve of the clocke, and take his part, O’Neale is not beholding to you, and will doe to the uttermost of his power to overthrow you, if you come not to him at furthest by Saturday at noone. From Knocke Dumayne in Calrie, the fourth of February, 1599.

“ O’Neale requesteth you to come speake with him, and doth giue you his word that you shall receive no harme neither in comming nor going from him, whether you be friend or not, and bring with you to O’Neale Gerat Fitzgerald.

(Subscribed) “ O’NEALE.”

Nor did the royalty of O’Neale consist in words alone. Sir John Harrington paid him a visit at the time of his truce with Essex, and, after mentioning his “ fern table, and fern forms, spread under the stately canopy of heaven,” he notices what constitutes the real power of every monarch, the love, namely, and allegiance of his subjects. “ His guards, for the most part, were beardless boys without shirts; who in the frost wade as familiarly through rivers as water-spaniels. With what charm such a master makes them love him, I know not; but if he bid come, they come; if go, they do go; if he say do this, they do it.”—*Nugæ Antiquæ*. Lond. 1784, 8vo, vol. 1. p. 251.

His foster-father was his guide.—P. 185.

There was no tie more sacred among the Irish than that which connected the foster-father, as well as the nurse herself, with the child they brought up.

“ Foster-fathers spend much more time, money, and affection on their foster-children than their own; and in return take from them clothes, money for their several professions, and arms, and, even for any vicious purposes, fortunes and cattle, not so much by a claim of right as by extortion; and they will even carry those things off as plunder. All who have been nursed by the same person preserve a greater mutual affection and confidence in each other than if they were natural brothers, whom they will even hate for the sake of these. When chid by their parents, they fly to their foster-fathers, who frequently encourage them to make open war on their parents, train them

up to every excess of wickedness, and make them most abandoned miscreants; as, on the other hand, the nurses make the young women, whom they bring up for every excess. If a foster-child is sick, it is incredible how soon the nurses hear of it, however distant, and with what solicitude they attend it by day and night."—*Giraldus Cambrensis*, quoted by Camden, iv. 368.

This custom, like many other Irish usages, prevailed till of late in the Scottish Highlands, and was cherished by the chiefs as an easy mode of extending their influence and connection; and even in the Lowlands, during the last century, the connection between the nurse and foster-child was seldom dissolved but by the death of one party.

Great Nial of the Pledges Nine.—P. 187.

Neal Naighvallach, or Of the Nine Hostages, is said to have been Monarch of all Ireland, during the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. He exercised a predatory warfare on the coast of England and of Bretagne, or Armorica; and from the latter country brought off the celebrated Saint Patrick, a youth of sixteen, among other captives, whom he transported to Ireland. Neal derived his epithet from nine nations, or tribes, whom he held under his subjection, and from whom he took hostages. From one of Neal's sons were derived the Kinel-eoguin, or Race of Tyrone, which afforded monarchs both to Ireland and to Ulster. Neal (according to O'Flaherty's Ogygia) was killed by a poisoned arrow, in one of his descents on the coast of Bretagne.

Shane-Dymas wild.—P. 187.

This Shane-Dymas, or John the Wanton, held the title and power of O'Neale in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, against whom he rebelled repeatedly.

"This chieftain is handed down to us as the most proud and profligate man on earth. He was immoderately addicted to women and wine. He is said to have had 200 tuns of wine at once in his cellar at Dandram; but usquebaugh was his favourite liquor. He spared neither age nor condition of the fair sex. Altho' so illiterate that he could not write, he was not destitute of address, his understanding was strong, and his courage daring. He had 600 men for his guard; 4000 foot, 1000 horse for the field. He claimed superiority over all the lords of Ulster, and called himself king thereof. When commissioners were sent to treat with him, he said, 'That, tho' the Queen were his sovereign lady, he never made peace with her *but at her lodging*; that she had made a wise Earl of Macartymore, but that he kept as good a man as he; that he cared not for so mean a title as Earl; that his blood and power were better than the best; that his ancestors were Kings of Ulster; and that he would give place to none.' His kinsman, the Earl of Kildare, having persuaded him of the folly of contending with the crown of England, he resolved to attend the Queen, but in a style suited to his princely dignity. He appeared in London with a magnificent train of Irish Galloglasses, arrayed in the richest habiliments of their country, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, with their long and open sleeves dyed with saffron. Thus dressed, and surcharged with military harness, and armed with battle-axes, they afforded an astonishing spectacle to the citizens, who regarded them as the intruders of some very distant part of the globe. But at Court his versatility now prevailed; his title to the sovereignty of Tyrone was pleaded from English laws and Irish institutions, and his allegations were so specious, that the Queen dismissed him with presents and assurances of favour. In England this transaction was

looked on as the humiliation of a repenting rebel; in Tyrone it was considered as a treaty of peace between two potentates."—CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, by Gough. Lond. 1806, fol. vol. iv. p. 442.

When reduced to extremity by the English, and forsaken by his allies, this Shane-Dymas fled to Clandeboy, then occupied by a colony of Scottish Highlanders of the family of MacDonell. He was at first courteously received; but by degrees they began to quarrel about the slaughter of some of their friends whom Shane-Dymas had put to death, and advancing from words to deeds, fell upon him with their broadswords, and cut him to pieces. After his death a law was made that none should presume to take the name and title of O'Neale.

————— *Geraldine.*—P. 187.

The O'Neales were closely allied with this powerful and warlike family; for Henry Owen O'Neale married the daughter of Thomas Earl of Kildare, and their son Con-More married his cousin-german, a daughter of Gerald Earl of Kildare. This Con-More cursed any of his posterity who should learn the English language, sow corn, or build houses, so as to invite the English to settle in their country. Others ascribe this anathema to his son Con-Bacco. Fearflatha O'Gnive, bard to the O'Neales of Clannaboy, complains in the same spirit of the towers and ramparts with which the strangers had *disfigured* the fair sporting fields of Erin.—See WALKER'S *Irish Bards*, p. 140.

He chose that honour'd flag to bear.—P. 188.

Lacy informs us, in the old play already quoted, how the cavalry raised by the country gentlemen for Charles's service were usually officered. "You, cornet, have a name that's proper for all cornets to be called by, for they are all beardless boys in our army. The most part of our horse were raised thus:—The honest country gentleman raises the troop at his own charge; then he gets a Low-country lieutenant to fight his troop safely; then he sends for his son from school to be his cornet: and then he puts off his child's coat to put on a buff-coat: and this is the constitution of our army."

————— *his page, the next degree*
In that old time to chivalry.—P. 188.

Originally, the order of chivalry embraced three ranks:—1. The Page; 2. The Squire; 3. the Knight;—a gradation which seems to have been imitated in the mystery of freemasonry. But, before the reign of Charles I., the custom of serving as a squire had fallen into disuse, though the order of the page was still, to a certain degree, in observance. This state of servitude was so far from inferring anything degrading, that it was considered as the regular school for acquiring every quality necessary for future distinction.

Seem'd half abandon'd to decay.—P. 198.

The ancient castle of Rokeby stood exactly upon the site of the present mansion, by which a part of its walls is enclosed. It is surrounded by a profusion of fine wood, and the park in which it stands is adorned by the junction of the Greta and of the Tees. The title of Baron Rokeby of Armagh was, in 1777, conferred on the Right Reverend Richard Robinson, Primate of Ireland, descended of the Robinsons, formerly of Rokeby in Yorkshire.

*Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name.*—P. 201.

"The family of De Rokeby came over with the Conqueror.
"The old motto belonging to the family is *In Bivio Dextra*.
"The arms, argent, chevron sable, between three rooks proper.
"There is somewhat more to be found in our family in the Scottish history about the affairs of Dun-Bretton town, but what it is, and in what time, I know not, nor can have convenient leisure to search. But Parson Blackwood, the Scottish chaplain to the Lord of Shrewsbury, recited to me once a piece of a Scottish song, wherein was mentioned, that William Wallis, the great deliverer of the Scots from the English bondage, should, at Dun-Bretton, have been brought up under a Rokeby, captain then of the place; and as he walked on a cliff, should thrust him on a sudden into the sea, and thereby have gotten that hold, which, I think, was about the 33d of Edw. I. or before. Thus, leaving our ancestors of record, we must also with them leave the Chronicle of Malmesbury Abbey, called *Eulogium Historiarum*, out of which Mr. Leland reporteth this history, and copy down unwritten story, the which have yet the testimony of later times, and the fresh memory of men yet alive, for their warrant and credit, of whom I have learned it, that in K. Henry the 7th's reign, one Ralph Rokeby, Esq. was owner of Morton, and I guess that this was he that deceived the fryars of Richmond with his felon swine, on which a jargon was made."

The above is a quotation from a manuscript written by Ralph Rokeby; when he lived is uncertain.

To what metrical Scottish tradition Parson Blackwood alluded, it would be now in vain to enquire. But in Blind Harry's *History of Sir William Wallace*, we find a legend of one Rukbie, whom he makes keeper of Stirling Castle under the English usurpation, and whom Wallace slays with his own hand:—

"In the great press Wallace and Rukbie met,
With his good sword a stroke upon him set;
Derfly to death the old Rukbie he drave,
But his two sons escaped among the lave."

These sons, according to the romantic Minstrel, surrendered the castle on conditions, and went back to England, but returned to Scotland in the days of Bruce, when one of them became again keeper of Stirling Castle. Immediately after this achievement follows another engagement, between Wallace and those Western Highlanders who embraced the English interest, at a pass in Glendonchart, where many were precipitated into the lake over a precipice. These circumstances may have been confused in the narrative of Parson Blackwood, or in the recollection of Mr. Rokeby.

——— *The Felon Sow.*—P. 202.

The ancient minstrels had a comic as well as a serious strain of romance; and although the examples of the latter are by far the most numerous, they are, perhaps, the less valuable. The comic romance was a sort of parody upon the usual subjects of minstrel poetry. If the latter described deeds of heroic achievement, and the events of the battle, the tourney, and the chase, the former, as in the *Tournament of Tottenham*, introduced a set of clowns debating in the field, with all the assumed circumstances of chivalry; or, as in the *Hunting of the Hare* (see Weber's *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii.), persons of the same description following the chase, with all the grievous mistakes and blunders incident to such unpractised sportsmen. The idea, therefore,

of Don Quixote's frenzy, although inimitably embodied and brought out, was not, perhaps, in the abstract, altogether original. One of the very best of these mock romances, and which has no small portion of comic humour, is the *Hunting of the Felon Sow of Rokeby* by the Friars of Richmond. Ralph Rokeby, who (for the jest's sake apparently) bestowed this intractable animal on the convent of Richmond, seems to have flourished in the time of Henry VII., which, since we know not the date of Friar Theobald's wardenship, to which the poem refers us, may indicate that of the composition itself. Morton, the Mortham of the text, is mentioned as being this facetious baron's place of residence; accordingly, Leland notices, that "Mr. Rokeby hath a place called Mortham, a little beneath Grentey-bridge, almost on the mouth of Grentney."

The Filea of O'Neale was he.—P. 202.

The Filea, or Ollamh Re Dan, was the proper bard, or, as the name literally implies, poet. Each chieftain of distinction had one or more in his service, whose office was usually hereditary. The late ingenious Mr. Cooper Walker has assembled a curious collection of particulars concerning this order of men, in his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. There were itinerant bards of less elevated rank, but all were held in the highest veneration. The English, who considered them as chief supporters of the spirit of national independence, were much disposed to proscribe this race of poets, as Edward I. is said to have done in Wales. Spenser, while he admits the merit of their wild poetry, as "savouring of sweet wit and good invention, and sprinkled with some pretty flowers of their natural device," yet rigorously condemns the whole application of their poetry, as abased to "the gracing of wickedness and vice." The household minstrel was admitted even to the feast of the prince whom he served, and sat at the same table.

*Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more.*—P. 202.

Clandeboy is a district of Ulster, formerly possessed by the sept of the O'Neales, and Slieve-Donard, a romantic mountain in the same province. The clan was ruined after Tyrone's great rebellion, and their places of abode laid desolate. The ancient Irish, wild and uncultivated in other respects, did not yield even to their descendants in practising the most free and extended hospitality; and doubtless the bards mourned the decay of the mansion of their chiefs in strains similar to the verses of the British Llywarch Hen on a similar occasion.

MacCurtin's harp.—P. 205.

"MacCurtin, hereditary Ollamh of North Munster, and Filea to Donough, Earl of Thomond, and President of Munster. This nobleman was amongst those who were prevailed upon to join Elizabeth's forces. Soon as it was known that he had basely abandoned the interests of his country, MacCurtin presented an adulatory poem to MacCarthy, chief of South Munster, and of the Eugenic line, who, with O'Neil, O'Donnel, Lacy, and others, were deeply engaged in protecting their violated country. In this poem he dwells with rapture on the courage and patriotism of MacCarthy; but the verse that should (according to an established law of the order of the bards) be introduced in the praise of O'Brien, he turns into severe satire:—'How am I afflicted (says he) that the descendant of the great Brion Boiromh cannot furnish me with a theme worthy the honour and glory of his

exalted race!' Lord Thomond, hearing this, vowed vengeance on the spirited bard, who fled for refuge to the county of Cork. One day observing the exasperated nobleman and his equipage at a small distance, he thought it was in vain to fly, and pretended to be suddenly seized with the pangs of death; directing his wife to lament over him, and tell his lordship, that the sight of him, by awakening the sense of his ingratitude, had so much affected him that he could not support it; and desired her at the same time to tell his lordship, that he entreated, as a dying request, his forgiveness. Soon as Lord Thomond arrived, the feigned tale was related to him. That nobleman was moved to compassion, and not only declared that he most heartily forgave him, but, opening his purse, presented the fair mourner with some pieces to inter him. This instance of his lordship's pity and generosity gave courage to the trembling bard; who, suddenly springing up, recited an extemporaneous ode in praise of Donough, and, re-entering into his service, became once more his favourite."—WALKER'S *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. Lond. 1786, 4to, p. 141.

The ancient English minstrel's dress.—P. 206.

Among the entertainments presented to Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle, was the introduction of a person designed to represent a travelling minstrel, who entertained her with a solemn story out of the Acts of King Arthur. Of this person's dress and appearance Mr. Laneham has given us a very accurate account, transferred by Bishop Percy to the preliminary Dissertation on Minstrels, prefixed to his *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol. i.

Littlecote Hall.—P. 213.

The tradition from which the ballad is founded, was supplied by a friend (the late Lord Webb Seymour), whose account I will not do the injustice to abridge, as it contains an admirable picture of an old English hall:—

"Littlecote House stands in a low and lonely situation. On three sides it is surrounded by a park that spreads over the adjoining hill; on the fourth, by meadows which are watered by the river Kennet. Close on one side of the house is a thick grove of lofty trees, along the verge of which runs one of the principal avenues to it through the park. It is an irregular building of great antiquity, and was probably erected about the time of the termination of feudal warfare, when defence came no longer to be an object in a country mansion. Many circumstances, however, in the interior of the house, seem appropriate to feudal times. The hall is very spacious, floored with stones, and lighted by large transom windows, that are clothed with casements. Its walls are hung with old military accoutrements, that have long been left a prey to rust. At one end of the hall is a range of coats of mail and helmets, and there is on every side abundance of old-fashioned pistols and guns, many of them with match-locks. Immediately below the cornice hangs a row of leathern jerkins, made in the form of a shirt, supposed to have been worn as armour by the vassals. A large oak table, reaching nearly from one end of the room to the other, might have feasted the whole neighbourhood, and an appendage to one end of it made it answer at other times for the old game of shuffleboard. The rest of the furniture is in a suitable style, particularly an arm-chair of cumbersome workmanship, constructed of wood, curiously turned, with a high back and triangular seat, said to have been used by Judge Popham in the reign of Elizabeth. The entrance into the hall is at one end, by a low door, communicating with a passage that leads from the outer

door in the front of the house to a quadrangle within; at the other, it opens upon a gloomy staircase, by which you ascend to the first floor, and, passing the doors of some bedchambers, enter a narrow gallery, which extends along the back front of the house from one end to the other of it, and looks upon an old garden. This gallery is hung with portraits, chiefly in the Spanish dresses of the sixteenth century. In one of the bedchambers, which you pass in going towards the gallery, is a bedstead with blue furniture, which time has now made dingy and threadbare, and in the bottom of one of the bed curtains you are shown a place where a small piece has been cut out and sewn in again—a circumstance which serves to identify the scene of the following story:—

“It was on a dark rainy night in the month of November, that an old midwife sat musing by her cottage fire-side, when on a sudden she was startled by a loud knocking at the door. On opening it she found a horseman, who told her that her assistance was required immediately by a person of rank, and that she should be handsomely rewarded; but that there were reasons for keeping the affair a strict secret, and, therefore, she must submit to be blindfolded, and to be conducted in that condition to the bedchamber of the lady. With some hesitation the midwife consented; the horseman bound her eyes, and placed her on a pillow behind him. After proceeding in silence for many miles through rough and dirty lanes, they stopped, and the midwife was led into a house, which, from the length of her walk through the apartments, as well as the sounds about her, she discovered to be the seat of wealth and power. When the bandage was removed from her eyes, she found herself in a bedchamber, in which were the lady on whose account she had been sent for, and a man of a haughty and ferocious aspect. The lady was delivered of a fine boy. Immediately the man commanded the midwife to give him the child, and catching it from her, he hurried across the room, and threw it on the back of the fire, that was blazing in the chimney. The child, however, was strong, and, by its struggles, rolled itself upon the hearth, when the ruffian again seized it with fury, and, in spite of the intercession of the midwife, and the more piteous entreaties of the mother, thrust it under the grate, and, raking the live coals upon it, soon put an end to its life. The midwife, after spending some time in affording all the relief in her power to the wretched mother, was told that she must be gone. Her former conductor appeared, who again bound her eyes, and conveyed her behind him to her own home; he then paid her handsomely, and departed. The midwife was strongly agitated by the horrors of the preceding night; and she immediately made a deposition of the facts before a magistrate. Two circumstances afforded hopes of detecting the house in which the crime had been committed; one was, that the midwife, as she sat by the bedside, had, with a view to discover the place, cut out a piece of the bed-curtain, and sewn it in again; the other was, that as she had descended the staircase she had counted the steps. Some suspicions fell upon one Darrell, at that time the proprietor of Littlecote House, and the domain around it. The house was examined, and identified by the midwife, and Darrell was tried at Salisbury for the murder. By corrupting his judge, he escaped the sentence of the law; but broke his neck by a fall from his horse in hunting, in a few months after. The place where this happened is still known by the name of Darrell's Style,—a spot to be dreaded by the peasant whom the shades of evening have overtaken on his way.

“Littlecote House is two miles from Hungerford, in Berkshire, through which the Bath road passes. The fact occurred in the reign of Elizabeth. All the important circumstances I have given exactly as they are told in the country; some trifles only are added, either to render the whole connected, or to increase the impression.”

*As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallow-tide or Christmas-even.—P. 216.*

Such an exhortation was, in similar circumstances, actually given to his followers by a Welsh chieftain:—

“Enmity did continue betweenne Howell ap Rys ap Howell Vaughan and the sonnes of John ap Meredith. After the death of Evan ap Rebert, Griffith ap Gronw (cosen-german to John ap Meredith’s sonnes of Gwynfryn, who had long served in France, and had charge there) comeing home to live in the countrey, it happened that a servant of his, comeing to fish in Stymllyn, his fish was taken away, and the fellow beaten by Howell ap Rys his servants, and by his commandment. Griffith ap John ap Gronw took the matter in such dudgeon that he challenged Howell ap Rys to the field, which he refusing, assembling his cosins John ap Meredith’s sonnes and his friends together, assaulted Howell in his own house, after the maner he had seene in the French warres, and consumed with fire his barnes and his out-houses. Whilst he was thus assaulting the hall, which Howell ap Rys and many other people kept, being a very strong house, he was shot, out of a crevice of the house, through the sight of his beaver into the head, and slayne outright, being otherwise armed at all points. Notwithstanding his death, the assault of the house was continued with great vehemence, the doores fired with great burthens of straw; besides this, the smoake of the out-houses and barnes not farre distant annoyed greatly the defendants, for that most of them lay under boordes and benches upon the floore, in the hall, the better to avoyd the smoake. During this scene of confusion onely the old man, Howell ap Rys, never stooped, but stood valiantly in the midst of the floore, armed with a gleve in his hand, and called unto them, and bid ‘them arise like men, for shame, for he had knowne there as great a smoake in that hall upon Christmas-even.’ In the end, seeing the house could noe longer defend them, being overlaid with a multitude, upon parley betweenne them, Howell ap Rys was content to yeald himself prisoner to Morris ap John ap Meredith, John ap Meredith’s eldest sonne, soe as he would swear unto him to bring him safe to Carnarvon Castle, to abide the triall of the law for the death of Graff ap John ap Gronw, who was cosen-german removed to the said Howell ap Rys, and of the very same house he was of.—SIR JOHN WYNNE’S *History of the Gwydw Family*. Lond. 1770, 8vo, p. 116.

O’er Hexham’s altar hung my glove.—P. 231.

This custom among the Redesdale and Tynedale Borderers is mentioned in the interesting *Life of Barnard Gilpin*, where some account is given of these wild districts, which it was the custom of that excellent man regularly to visit.

“This custom (of duels) still prevailed on the Borders, where Saxon barbarism held its latest possession. These wild Northumbrians, indeed, went beyond the ferocity of their ancestors. They were not content with a duel: each contending party used to muster what adherents he could, and commence a kind of petty war. So that a private grudge would often occasion much bloodshed.

“It happened that a quarrel of this kind was on foot when Mr. Gilpin was at Rothbury, in those parts. During the two or three first days of his preaching, the contending parties observed some decorum, and never appeared at church together. At length, however, they met. One party had been early at church, and just as Mr. Gilpin began his sermon, the other entered. They stood not long silent. Inflamed at the sight of each other, they began to clash their weapons, for they

were all armed with javelins and swords, and mutually approached. Awed, however, by the sacredness of the place, the tumult in some degree ceased. Mr. Gilpin proceeded: when again the combatants began to brandish their weapons, and draw towards each other. As a fray seemed near, Mr. Gilpin stepped from the pulpit, went between them, and addressed the leaders, put an end to the quarrel, for the present, but could not effect an entire reconciliation. They promised him, however, that till the sermon was over they would make no more disturbance. He then went again into the pulpit, and spent the rest of the time in endeavouring to make them ashamed of what they had done. His behaviour and discourse affected them so much, that, at his farther entreaty, they promised to forbear all acts of hostility while he continued in the country. And so much respected was he among them, that whoever was in fear of his enemy used to resort where Mr. Gilpin was, esteeming his presence the best protection.

"One Sunday morning, coming to a church in those parts, before the people were assembled, he observed a glove hanging up, and was informed by the sexton, that it was meant as a challenge to any one who should take it down. Mr. Gilpin ordered the sexton to reach it to him; but upon his utterly refusing to touch it, he took it down himself, and put it into his breast. When the people were assembled, he went into the pulpit, and, before he concluded his sermon, took occasion to rebuke them severely for these inhuman challenges. 'I hear,' saith he, 'that one among you hath hanged up a glove, even in this sacred place, threatening to fight any one who taketh it down: see, I have taken it down;' and, pulling out the glove, he held it up to the congregation, and then showed them how unsuitable such savage practices were to the profession of Christianity, using such persuasives to mutual love as he thought would most affect them."—*Life of Barnard Gilpin*. Lond. 1753, 8vo, p. 177.

A Horseman arm'd, at headlong speed.—P. 237.

This, and what follows, is taken from a real achievement of Major Robert Philipson, called from his desperate and adventurous courage, Robin the Devil; which, as being very inaccurately noticed in this note upon the first edition, shall be now given in a more authentic form. The chief place of his retreat was not Lord's Island, in Derwentwater, but Curwen's Island, in the Lake of Windermere:—

"This island formerly belonged to the Philipsons, a family of note in Westmoreland. During the Civil Wars, two of them, an elder and a younger brother, served the King. The former, who was the proprietor of it, commanded a regiment; the latter was a major.

"The major, whose name was Robert, was a man of great spirit and enterprise; and for his many feats of personal bravery had obtained, among the Oliverians of those parts, the appellation of Robin the Devil.

"After the war had subsided, and the direful effects of public opposition had ceased, revenge and malice long kept alive the animosity of individuals. Colonel Briggs, a steady friend to usurpation, resided at this time at Kendal, and, under the double character of a leading magistrate (for he was a Justice-of-Peace) and an active commander, held the country in awe. This person having heard that Major Philipson was at his brother's house on the island in Windermere, resolved, if possible, to seize and punish a man who had made himself so particularly obnoxious. How it was conducted, my authority¹ does not inform us—whether he got together the navigation of the lake, and blockaded the place by sea, or whether he landed and carried on his

¹ Dr. Burn's *History of Westmoreland*.

approaches in form. Neither do we learn the strength of the garrison within, nor of the works without. All we learn is, that Major Philipson endured a siege of eight months with great gallantry, till his brother, the Colonel, raised a party and relieved him.

"It was now the Major's turn to make reprisals. He put himself, therefore, at the head of a little troop of horse, and rode to Kendal. Here, being informed that Colonel Briggs was at prayers (for it was on a Sunday morning), he stationed his men properly in the avenues, and himself armed, rode directly into the church. It probably was not a regular church, but some large place of meeting. It is said he intended to seize the Colonel and carry him off; but as this seems to have been totally impracticable, it is rather probable that his intention was to kill him on the spot, and in the midst of the confusion to escape. Whatever his intention was, it was frustrated, for Briggs happened to be elsewhere.

"The congregation, as might be expected, was thrown into great confusion on seeing an armed man on horseback make his appearance among them; and the Major, taking advantage of their astonishment, turned his horse around, and rode quietly out. But having given an alarm, he was presently assaulted as he left the assembly, and being seized, his girths were cut, and he was unhorsed.

"At this instant his party made a furious attack on the assailants, and the Major killed with his own hand the man who had seized him, clapped the saddle, ungirthed as it was, upon his horse, and, vaulting into it, rode full speed through the streets of Kendal, calling his men to follow him; and, with his whole party, made a safe retreat to his asylum in the lake. The action marked the man. Many knew him: and they who did not, knew as well from the exploit that it could be nobody but Robin the Devil."

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN

Like Collins, thread the maze of Fairy land.—P. 243.

Collins, according to Johnson, "by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens."

The Baron of Triermain.—P. 243.

Triermain was a fief of the Barony of Gilsland, in Cumberland; it was possessed by a Saxon family at the time of the Conquest, but, "after the death of Gilmore, Lord of Tryermaine and Torcrossock, Hubert Vaux gave Tryermaine and Torcrossock to his second son, Ranulph Vaux; which Ranulph afterwards became heir to his elder brother Robert, the founder of Lanercost, who died without issue. Ranulph, being Lord of all Gilsland, gave Gilmore's lands to his younger son, named Roland, and let the Barony descend to his eldest son Robert, son of Ranulph. Roland had issue Alexander, and he Ranulph, after whom succeeded Robert, and they were named Rolands successively, that were lords thereof, until the reign of Edward the

Fourth. That house gave for arms, Vert, a bend dexter, chequy, or and gules."—BURN'S *Antiquities of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, vol. ii. p. 482.

This branch of Vaux, with its collateral alliances, is now represented by the family of Braddyl of Conishead Priory, in the county palatine of Lancaster; for it appears that about the time above mentioned, the house of Triermain was united to its kindred family of Vaux of Caterlen, and, by marriage with the heiress of Delamore and Leybourne, became the representative of those ancient and noble families.

He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round.—P. 246.

A circular intrenchment, about half a mile from Penrith, is thus popularly termed. The circle within the ditch is about one hundred and sixty paces in circumference, with openings, or approaches, directly opposite to each other. As the ditch is on the inner side, it could not be intended for the purpose of defence, and it has reasonably been conjectured that the enclosure was designed for the solemn exercise of feats of chivalry, and the embankment around for the convenience of the spectators.

Mayburgh's mound.—P. 246.

Higher up the river Eamont than Arthur's Round Table, is a prodigious enclosure of great antiquity, formed by a collection of stones upon the top of a gently sloping hill, called Mayburgh. In the plain which it encloses there stands erect an unhewn stone of twelve feet in height. Two similar masses are said to have been destroyed during the memory of man. The whole appears to be a monument of Druidical times.

*The Monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed—
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky.*—P. 257.

—"We now gained a view of the Vale of St. John's, a very narrow dell, hemmed in by mountains, through which a small brook makes many meanderings, washing little enclosures of grass-ground, which stretch up the rising of the hills. In the widest part of the dale you are struck with the appearance of an ancient ruined castle, which seems to stand upon the summit of a little mount, the mountains around forming an amphitheatre. This massive bulwark shows a front of various towers, and makes an awful, rude, and Gothic appearance, with its lofty turrets and ragged battlements; we traced the galleries, the bending arches, the buttresses. The greatest antiquity stands characterised in its architecture; the inhabitants near it assert it is an antediluvian structure.

"The traveller's curiosity is roused, and he prepares to make a nearer approach, when that curiosity is put upon the rack, by his being assured, that, if he advances, certain genii who govern the place, by virtue of their supernatural art and necromancy, will strip it of all its beauties, and by enchantment, transform the magic walls. The vale seems adapted for the habitation of such beings; its gloomy recesses and retirements look like the haunts of evil spirits. There was no delusion in the report; we were soon convinced of its truth; for this piece of antiquity, so venerable and noble in its aspect, as we drew near, changed its figure, and proved no other than a shaken massive pile of rocks, which stand in the midst of this little vale, dis-

united from the adjoining mountains, and have so much the real form and resemblance of a castle, that they bear the name of the Castle Rocks of St. John."—HUTCHINSON'S *Excursions to the Lakes*, p. 121.

*There Morolt of the iron mace,
And love-lorn Tristrem there.*—P. 258.

The characters named in the stanza are all of them more or less distinguished in the romances which treat of King Arthur and his Round Table, and their names are strung together according to the established custom of minstrels upon such occasions; for example, in the ballad of the Marriage of Sir Gawaine:—

"Sir Lancelot, Sir Stephen bolde,
They rode with them that daye,
And, foremost of the companye,
There rode the stewarde Kaye.

"Soe did Sir Banier, and Sir Bore,
And eke Sir Garratte keen,
Sir Tristrem too, that gentle knight,
To the forest fresh and greene."

*Lancelot, that ever more
Look'd stolen-wise on the Queen.*—P. 258.

Upon this delicate subject hear Richard Robinson, citizen of London, in his *Assertion of King Arthur*:—"But as it is a thing sufficiently apparent that she (Guenever, wife of King Arthur), was beautiful, so it is a thing doubted whether she was chaste, yea or no. Truly, so far as I can with honestie, I would spare the impayred honour and fame of noble women. But yet the truth of the historie pluckes me by the eare, and willeth not onely, but commandeth me to declare what the ancients have deemed of her. To wrestle or contend with so great authoritie were indeede unto mei a controversie, and that greate."—*Assertion of King Arthure*. Imprinted by John Wolfe, London, 1582.

*There were two who loved their neighbour's wives,
And one who loved his own.*—P. 260.

"In our forefathers' tyme, when Papistrie, as a standyng poole, covered and overflowed all England, fewe books were read in our tongue, sayving certaine bookes of chevalrie, as they said, for pastime and pleasure; which, as some say, were made in the monasteries, by idle monks or wanton chanons. As one, for example, *La Morte d'Arthure*; the whole pleasure of which book standeth in two speciall poynts, in open manslaughter and bold bawdrye; in which booke they be counted the noblest knightes that do kill most men without any quarrell, and commit fowlest adulteries by sutlest shiftes; as Sir Launcelot, with the wife of King Arthur, his master; Sir Tristram, with the wife of King Marke, his uncle; Sir Lamerocke, with the wife of King Lote, that was his own aunt. This is good stuffe for wise men to laugh at; or honest men to take pleasure at: yet I know when God's Bible was banished the Court, and *La Morte d'Arthure* received into the Prince's chamber."—ASCHAM'S *Schoolmaster*.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES

Thy rugged halls, Artornish ! rung.—P. 294.

The ruins of the Castle of Artornish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the Sound of Mull, a name given to the deep arm of the sea which divides that island from the continent. The situation is wild and romantic in the highest degree, having on the one hand a high and precipitous chain of rocks overhanging the sea, and on the other the narrow entrance to the beautiful salt-water lake, called Loch Alline, which is in many places finely fringed with copsewood. The ruins of Artornish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences. But, in former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds, which the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire. Here they assembled what popular tradition calls their parliaments, meaning, I suppose, their *cour plenièrè*, or assembly of feudal and patriarchal vassals and dependents.

*Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark,
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark.—P. 295.*

The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections. They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played, and even a tune simply whistled has attractions for them. The Dean of the Isles says of Heiskar, a small uninhabited rock, about twelve (Scottish) miles from the isle of Uist, that an infinite slaughter of seals takes place there.

————— *a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull ! thy mighty Sound.—P. 297.*

The Sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Sailing from Oban to Aros, or Tobermory, through a narrow channel, yet deep enough to bear vessels of the largest burden, he has on his left the bold and mountainous shores of Mull; on the right those of that district of Argyleshire, called Morven, or Morvern, successively indented by deep salt-water lochs, running up many miles inland. To the south-eastward arise a prodigious range of mountains, among which Cruachan-Ben is pre-eminent. And to the north-east is the no less huge and picturesque range of the Ardnamurchan hills. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene. Those of Donolly and Dunstaffnage are first passed, then that of Duart, formerly belonging to the chief of the warlike and powerful sept of Macleans, and the scene of Miss Baillie's beautiful tragedy, entitled the *Family Legend*. Still passing on to the northward, Artornish and Aros become visible upon the opposite shores; and, lastly, Mingarry, and other ruins of less distinguished note. In fine weather, a grander and more impressive scene, both from its natural beauties, and associations with ancient history and tradition, can hardly be imagined. When the weather is rough, the passage is both difficult and dangerous, from the narrowness of the channel, and in part from the number of inland lakes, out of which

sally forth a number of conflicting and thwarting tides, making the navigation perilous to open boats. The sudden flaws and gusts of wind which issue without a moment's warning from the mountain glens, are equally formidable. So that in unsettled weather, a stranger, if not much accustomed to the sea, may sometimes add to the other sublime sensations excited by the scene, that feeling of dignity which arises from a sense of danger.

—these seas behold,
Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
To the green Ilay's fertile shore.—P. 297.

The number of the western isles of Scotland exceeds two hundred, of which St. Kilda is the most northerly, anciently called Hirth, or Hirt, probably from "earth," being in fact the whole globe to its inhabitants. Ilay, which now belongs almost entirely to Walter Campbell, Esq., of Shawfield, is by far the most fertile of the Hebrides, and has been greatly improved under the spirited and sagacious management of the present proprietor. This was in ancient times the principal abode of the Lords of the Isles, being, if not the largest, the most important island of their archipelago. In Martin's time, some relics of their grandeur were yet extant. "Loch-Finlagan, about three miles in circumference, affords salmon, trouts, and eels: this lake lies in the centre of the isle. The Isle Finlagan, from which this lake hath its name, is in it. It is famous for being once the court in which the great Mac-Donald, King of the Isles, had his residence; his houses, chapel, etc., are now ruinous. His *guards de corps*, called Luchttach, kept guard on the lake side nearest to the isle; the walls of their houses are still to be seen there. The high court of judicature, consisting of fourteen, sat always here; and there was an appeal to them from all the courts in the isles: the eleventh share of the sum in debate was due to the principal judge. There was a big stone of seven foot square, in which there was a deep impression made to receive the feet of Mac-Donald; for he was crowned King of the Isles standing in this stone, and swore that he would continue his vassals in the possession of their lands, and do exact justice to all his subjects: and then his father's sword was put into his hand. The Bishop of Argyll and seven priests anointed him king, in presence of all the heads of the tribes in the isles and continent, and were his vassals; at which time the orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors," etc.—MARTIN'S *Account of the Western Isles*, 8vo, London, 1716, pp. 240, 1.

—Mingarry sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste.—P. 297.

The Castle of Mingarry is situated on the sea-coast of the district of Ardnamurchan. The ruins, which are tolerably entire, are surrounded by a very high wall, forming a kind of polygon, for the purpose of adapting itself to the projecting angles of a precipice overhanging the sea, on which the castle stands. It was anciently the residence of the Mac-Ians, a clan of Mac-Donalds, descended from Ian, or John, a grandson of Angus Og, Lord of the Isles. The last time that Mingarry was of military importance, occurs in the celebrated Leabhar dearg, or Red-book of Clanronald, a MS. renowned in the Ossianic controversy. Allaster Mac-Donald, commonly called Colquitto, who commanded the Irish auxiliaries sent over by the Earl of Antrim during the great civil war to the assistance of Montrose, began his enterprise in 1644, by taking the castles of Kinloch-Alline, and Mingarry, the last of

which made considerable resistance, as might, from the strength of the situation, be expected. In the meanwhile, Allaster Mac-Donald's ships, which had brought him over, were attacked in Loch Eisord, in Skye, by an armament sent round by the covenanting parliament, and his own vessel was taken. This circumstance is said chiefly to have induced him to continue in Scotland, where there seemed little prospect of raising an army in behalf of the King. He had no sooner moved eastward to join Montrose, a junction which he effected in the braes of Athole, than the Marquis of Argyle besieged the castle of Mingarry, but without success. Among other warriors and chiefs whom Argyle summoned to his camp to assist upon this occasion, was John of Moidart, the Captain of Clanronald. Clanronald appeared; but, far from yielding effectual assistance to Argyle, he took the opportunity of being in arms to lay waste the district of Sunart, then belonging to the adherents of Argyle, and sent part of the spoil to relieve the Castle of Mingarry. Thus the castle was maintained until relieved by Allaster Mac-Donald (Colquitto), who had been detached for the purpose by Montrose. These particulars are hardly worth mentioning; were they not connected with the memorable successes of Montrose, related by an eyewitness, and hitherto unknown to Scottish historians.

The heir of mighty Somerled.—P. 297.

Somerled was thane of Argyle and Lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century. He seems to have exercised his authority in both capacities, independent of the crown of Scotland, against which he often stood in hostility. He made various incursions upon the western lowlands during the reign of Malcolm IV., and seems to have made peace with him upon the terms of an independent prince, about the year 1157. In 1164, he resumed the war against Malcolm, and invaded Scotland with a large, but probably a tumultuary army, collected in the isles, in the mainland of Argyleshire, and in the neighbouring provinces of Ireland. He was defeated and slain in an engagement with a very inferior force, near Renfrew. His son Gillicolane fell in the same battle. This mighty chieftain married a daughter of Olaus, King of Man. From him our genealogists deduce two dynasties, distinguished in the stormy history of the Middle Ages; the Lords of the Isles descended from his elder son Ronald,—and the Lords of Lorn, who took their surname of M'Dougal, as descended of his second son Dougal. That Somerled's territories upon the mainland, and upon the islands, should have been thus divided between his two sons, instead of passing to the elder exclusively, may illustrate the uncertainty of descent among the great Highland families, which we shall presently notice.

Lord of the Isles.—P. 297.

The representative of this independent principality, for such it seems to have been, though acknowledging occasionally the pre-eminence of the Scottish crown, was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og; but the name has been, *euphoniae gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his Castle of Dunnaverty, during the time of his greatest distress.

"Angus Og," says an ancient manuscript translated from the Gaelic, "son of Angus Mor, son of Donald, son of Ronald, son of Somerled, high chief and superior Lord of Innisgall (or the Isles of the Gael, the general name given to the Hebrides), he married a daughter of Cunbui, namely, Cathan; she was mother to John, son of Angus, and with her

came an unusual portion from Ireland, viz. twenty-four clans, of whom twenty-four families in Scotland are descended. Angus had another son, namely, young John Fraoch, whose descendants are called Clan-Ean of Glencoe, and the M'Donalds of Fraoch. This Angus Og died in Isla, where his body was interred. His son John succeeded to the inheritance of Innisgall. He had good descendants, namely, three sons procreate of Ann, daughter of Rodric, high chief of Lorn, and one daughter, Mary, married to John Maclean, Laird of Duart, and Lauchlan, his brother, Laird of Coll; she was interred in the church of the Black Nuns. The eldest sons of John were Ronald, Godfrey, and Angus. . . . He gave Ronald a great inheritance. These were the lands which he gave him, viz. from Kilcumin in Abertarf to the river Seil, and from thence to Beilli, north of Eig and Rum, and the two Uists, and from thence to the foot of the river Glaichan, and threescore long ships. John married afterwards Margaret Stewart, daughter to Robert Stewart, King of Scotland, called John Fernyear; she bore him three good sons, Donald of the Isles, the heir, John the Tainister, (*i.e.* Thane), the second son, and Alexander Carrach. John had another son called Marcus, of whom the clan Macdonald of Cnoc, in Tirowen, are descended. This John lived long, and made donations to Icolumkill; he covered the chapel of Eorsay-Elan, the chapel of Finlagam, and the chapel of the Isle of Tsuibhne, and gave the proper furniture for the service of God, upholding the clergy and monks; he built or repaired the church of the Holy Cross immediately before his death. He died at his own castle of Ardtorinish, many priests and monks took the sacrament at his funeral, and they embalmed the body of this dear man, and brought it to Icolumkill; the abbot, monks, and vicar, came as they ought to meet the King of Fiongal,¹ and out of great respect to his memory mourned eight days and nights over it, and laid it in the same grave with his father, in the church of Oran, 1380.

— *The House of Lorn.*—P. 299.

The House of Lorn, as we observed in a former note, was, like the Lord of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew, in 1164. This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyleshire, and of course might rather be considered as petty princes than feudal barons. They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac-Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages. The Lord of Lorn, who flourished during the wars of Bruce, was Allaster (or Alexander) Mac-Dougal, called Allaster of Argyle. He had married the third daughter of John, called the Red Comyn, who was slain by Bruce in the Dominican Church at Dumfries, and hence he was a mortal enemy of that prince, and more than once reduced him to great straits during the early and distressed period of his reign, as we shall have repeated occasion to notice. The house of Mac-Dougal affords a very rare, if not a unique, instance of a family of such unlimited power, and so distinguished during the middle ages surviving the decay of their grandeur, and flourishing in a private station. The Castle of Dunolly, near Oban, with its dependencies, was the principal part of what remained to them, with their right of chieftainship over the families of their name and blood. These they continued to enjoy until the year 1715, when the representative incurred the penalty of forfeiture, for his accession to the insurrection of that period; thus losing the remains of his inheritance, to replace upon the throne the descendants of those princes, whose accession his

¹ Western Isles and adjacent coast.

ancestors had opposed at the expense of their feudal grandeur. The estate was, however, restored about 1745, to the father of the present proprietor, whom family experience had taught the hazard of interfering with the established government, and who remained quiet upon that occasion. He therefore regained his property when many Highland chiefs lost theirs.

Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than the situation of Dunolly. The ruins are situated upon a bold and precipitous promontory, overhanging Loch Etive, and distant about a mile from the village and port of Oban. The principal part which remains is the donjon or keep; but fragments of other buildings, overgrown with ivy, attest that it had been once a place of importance, as large apparently as Artornish or Dunstaffnage. These fragments enclose a courtyard, of which the keep probably formed one side; the entrance being by a steep ascent from the neck of the isthmus, formerly cut across by a moat, and defended doubtless by outworks and a drawbridge. Beneath the castle stands the present mansion of the family, having on the one hand Loch Etive, with its islands and mountains, on the other two romantic eminences tufted with copsewood. There are other accompaniments suited to the scene; in particular, a huge upright pillar, or detached fragment of that sort of rock called plum-pudding stone, upon the shore, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. It is called *Clach-na-cau*, or the Dog's Pillar, because Fingal is said to have used it as a stake to which he bound his celebrated dog Bran. Others say, that when the Lord of the Isles came upon a visit to the Lord of Lorn, the dogs brought for his sport were kept beside this pillar. Upon the whole, a more delightful and romantic spot can scarce be conceived! and it receives a moral interest from the considerations attached to the residence of a family once powerful enough to confront and defeat Robert Bruce, and now sunk into the shade of private life. It is at present possessed by Patrick Mac-Dougal, Esq., the lineal and undisputed representative of the ancient Lords of Lorn. The heir of Dunolly fell lately in Spain, fighting under the Duke of Wellington,—a death well becoming his ancestry.

Those lightnings of the wave.—P. 303.

The phenomenon called by sailors Sea-fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides. At times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness. These phosphoric appearances, concerning the origin of which naturalists are not agreed in opinion, seem to be called into action by the rapid motion of the ship through the water, and are probably owing to the water being saturated with fish-spawn, or other animal substances.

——— *The dark fortress.*—P. 304.

The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the seashore, for the facility of communication which the ocean afforded. Nothing can be more wild than the situations which they chose, and the devices by which the architects endeavoured to defend them. Narrow stairs and arched vaults were the usual mode of access; and the drawbridge appears at Dunstaffnage, and elsewhere, to have fallen from the gate of the building to the top of such a staircase; so that any one advancing with hostile purpose, found himself in a state of exposed and precarious elevation, with a gulf between him and the object of his attack.

These fortresses were guarded with equal care. The duty of the watch devolved chiefly upon an officer called the Cockman, who had the charge of challenging all who approached the castle. The very ancient family of Mac-Niel of Barra kept this attendant at their castle about a hundred years ago.

That keen knight, De Argentine.—P. 308.

Sir Egidius, or Giles de Argentine, was one of the most accomplished knights of the period. He had served in the wars of Henry of Luxemburg with such high reputation, that he was, in popular estimation, the third worthy of the age. Those to whom fame assigned precedence over him were, Henry of Luxemburg himself, and Robert Bruce. Argentine had warred in Palestine, encountered thrice with the Saracens, and had slain two antagonists in each engagement:—an easy matter, he said, for one Christian knight to slay two Pagan dogs. His death corresponded with his high character. With Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, he was appointed to attend immediately upon the person of Edward II. at Bannockburn. When the day was utterly lost they forced the king from the field. De Argentine saw the king safe from immediate danger, and then took his leave of him; "God be with you, sir," he said, "it is not my wont to fly." So saying, he turned his horse, cried his war-cry, plunged into the midst of the combatants, and was slain. Baston, a rhyming monk who had been brought by Edward to celebrate his expected triumph, and who was compelled by the victors to compose a poem on his defeat, mentions with some feeling the death of Sir Giles de Argentine:

*Nobilis Argenten, pugil inclyte, dulcis Egidi,
Vix scieram mentem cum te succumbere vidi.*

The first line mentions the three chief requisites of a true knight, noble birth, valour, and courteousness. Few Leonine couplets can be produced that have so much sentiment. I wish that I could have collected more ample memorials concerning a character altogether different from modern manners. "Sir Giles d'Argentine was a hero of romance in real life." So observes the excellent Lord Hailes.

*"Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,
"Erst own'd by royal Somerled."—P. 308.*

A Hebridean drinking cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac-Leod of Mac-Leod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan. The horn of Rorie More, preserved in the same family, and recorded by Dr. Johnson, is not to be compared with this piece of antiquity, which is one of the greatest curiosities in Scotland. The following is a pretty accurate description of its shape and dimensions, but cannot, I fear, be perfectly understood without a drawing.

This very curious piece of antiquity is nine inches and three-quarters in inside depth, and ten and a half in height on the outside, the extreme measure over the lips being four inches and a half. The cup is divided into two parts by a wrought ledge, beautifully ornamented, about three-fourths of an inch in breadth. Beneath this ledge the shape of the cup is rounded off, and terminates in a flat circle, like that of a tea-cup; four short feet support the whole. Above the projecting ledge the shape of the cup is nearly square, projecting outward at the brim. The cup is made of wood (oak to all appearance), but most curiously wrought and embossed with silver work, which projects from the

vessel. There are a number of regular projecting sockets, which appear to have been set with stones; two or three of them still hold pieces of coral, the rest are empty. At the four corners of the projecting ledge, or cornice, are four sockets, much larger, probably for pebbles or precious stones. The workmanship of the silver is extremely elegant, and appears to have been highly gilded. The ledge, brim, and legs of the cup, are of silver. The family tradition bears that it was the property of Neil Ghlune-dhu, or Black-knee. But who this Neil was, no one pretends to say. Around the edge of the cup is a legend, perfectly legible, in the Saxon black-letter, which seems to run thus:

Ufo : Jobis : Mich : || Mgn : Pncipis : De : ||
 Hr : Manae : Vich : || Liabia : Magryneil : ||
 Et : Spat : Do : Jhu : Da : || Clea : Jldra Jpa : ||
 Jfecit : Ano : Di : Jr : 930 Onili : Oimi : ||

The inscription may run thus at length: *Ufo Johanis Mich Magni Principis de Hr Manae Vich Liabia Magryneil et sperat Domino Ihesu dari clementiam illorum opera. Fecit Anno Domini 993 Onili Oimi.* Which may run in English: Ufo, the son of John, the son of Magnus, Prince of Man, the grandson of Liabia Macgryneil, trusts in the Lord Jesus that their works (*i.e.* his own and those of his ancestors) will obtain mercy. Oneil Oimi made this in the year of God nine hundred and ninety-three.

But this version does not include the puzzling letters HR before the word Manae. Within the mouth of the cup the letters **Jhs.** (Jesus) are repeated four times. From this and other circumstances it would seem to have been a chalice. This circumstance may perhaps account for the use of the two Arabic numerals 93. These figures were introduced by Pope Sylvester, A.D. 991, and might be used in a vessel formed for church service so early as 993. The workmanship of the whole cup is extremely elegant, and resembles, I am told, antiques of the same nature preserved in Ireland.

*With solemn step, and silver wand,
 The Seneschal the presence scann'd
 Of these strange guests.—P. 309.*

The Sewer, to whom, rather than the Seneschal, the office of arranging the guests of an island chief appertained, was an officer of importance in the family of a Hebridean chief.—“Every family had commonly two stewards, which, in their language, were called Marischal Tach: the first of these served always at home, and was obliged to be versed in the pedigree of all the tribes in the isles, and in the highlands of Scotland; for it was his province to assign every man at table his seat according to his quality; and this was done without one word speaking, only by drawing a score with a white rod, which this Marischal had in his hand, before the person who was bid by him to sit down: and this was necessary to prevent disorder and contention; and though the Marischal might sometimes be mistaken, the master of the family incurred no censure by such an escape; but this custom has been laid aside of late. They had also cup-bearers, who always filled and carried the cup round the company, and he himself always drank off the first draught. They had likewise purse-masters, who kept their money. Both these officers had an hereditary right to their office in writing, and each of them had a town and land for his service: some of those rights I have seen fairly written on good parchment.”—MARTIN'S *Western Isles*.

—*the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief?*—P. 310.

It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents. He was crowned at Scone by the general consent of the Scottish barons, but his authority endured but a short time. According to the phrase said to have been used by his wife, he was for that year "a summer king, but not a winter one." On the 29th March 1306, he was crowned king at Scone. Upon the 19th June, in the same year, he was totally defeated at Methven, near Perth; and his most important adherents, with few exceptions, were either executed or compelled to embrace the English interest, for safety of their lives and fortunes. After this disaster, his life was that of an outlaw, rather than a candidate for monarchy. He separated himself from the females of his retinue, whom he sent for safety to the Castle of Kildrummie, in Aberdeenshire, where they afterward became captives to England. From Aberdeenshire, Bruce retreated to the mountainous parts of Breadalbane, and approached the borders of Argyleshire. There he was defeated by the Lord of Lorn, who had assumed arms against him in revenge of the death of his relative, John the Red Comyn. Escaped from this peril, Bruce, with his few attendants, subsisted by hunting and fishing, until the weather compelled them to seek better sustenance and shelter than the Highland mountains afforded. With great difficulty they crossed, from Rowardennan probably, to the western banks of Lochlomond, partly in a miserable boat, and partly by swimming. The valiant and loyal Earl of Lennox, to whose territories they had now found their way, welcomed them with tears, but was unable to assist them to make an effectual head. The Lord of the Isles, then in possession of great part of Cantyre, received the fugitive monarch and future restorer of his country's independence, in his castle of Dunnaverty, in that district. But treason, says Barbour, was so general, that the King durst not abide there. Accordingly, with the remnant of his followers, Bruce embarked for Rath-Erin, or Rachrine, the Recina of Ptolemy, a small island lying almost opposite to the shores of Ballycastle, on the coast of Ireland. The islanders at first fled from their new and armed guests, but upon some explanation submitted themselves to Bruce's sovereignty. He resided among them until the approach of spring [1306] when he again returned to Scotland, with the desperate resolution to reconquer his kingdom, or perish in the attempt. The progress of his success, from its commencement to its completion, forms the brightest period in Scottish history.

The Brooch of Lorn.—P. 311.

It has been generally mentioned in the preceding notes, that Robert Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire Highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the Lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac-Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men; that Mac-Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was

equal to his vigour of mind and would have been slain on the spot, had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms Mac-Keoch, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed by the other followers of Lorn, that he was forced to abandon the mantle, and brooch which fastened it, clasped in the dying grasp of the Mac-Keochs. A studded brooch, said to have been that which King Robert lost upon this occasion, was long preserved in the family of Mac-Dougal, and was lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.

The metrical history of Barbour throws an air of credibility upon the tradition, although it does not entirely coincide either in the names or number of the vassals by whom Bruce was assailed, and makes no mention of the personal danger of Lorn, or of the loss of Bruce's mantle.

*Wrought and chased with fair device,
Studded fair with gems of price.*—P. 311.

Great art and expense was bestowed upon the *fibula*, or brooch, which secured the plaid, when the wearer was a person of importance. Martin mentions having seen a silver brooch of a hundred marks value. "It was broad as any ordinary pewter plate, the whole curiously engraven with various animals, etc. There was a lesser buckle, which was wore in the middle of the larger, and above two ounces weight; it had in the centre a large piece of crystal, or some finer stone, and this was set all round with several finer stones of a lesser size."—*Western Islands*. Pennant has given an engraving of such a brooch as Martin describes, and the workmanship of which is very elegant. It is said to have belonged to the family of Lochbuy.—See PENNANT'S *Tour*, vol. iii. p. 14.

*Vain was then the Douglas brand—
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand.*—P. 312.

The gallant Sir James, called the Good Lord Douglas, the most faithful and valiant of Bruce's adherents, was wounded at the battle of Dalry. Sir Nigel, or Niel Campbell, was also in that unfortunate skirmish. He married Marjorie, sister to Robert Bruce, and was among his most faithful followers. In a manuscript account of the house of Argyle, supplied, it would seem, as materials for Archbishop Spottiswoode's *History of the Church of Scotland*, I find the following passage concerning Sir Niel Campbell:—"Moreover, when all the nobles in Scotland had left King Robert after his hard success, yet this noble knight was most faithful, and shrinked not."

*When Comyn fell beneath the knife
Of that fell homicide The Bruce.*—P. 305.
*Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work.*—P. 312.

Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland, was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The causes of this act of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians, and cannot now be ascertained. The fact that they met at the high altar of the Minorites, or Greyfriar's Church in Dumfries, that their difference broke out into

high and insulting language, and that Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, is certain. Rushing to the door of the church, Bruce met two powerful barons, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, and James de Lindsay, who eagerly asked him what tidings? "Bad tidings," answered Bruce; "I doubt I have slain Comyn."—"Doubtest thou?" said Kirkpatrick; "I make sicker" (*i.e.* sure.) With these words, he and Lindsay rushed into the church, and despatched the wounded Comyn. The Kirkpatricks of Closeburn assumed, in memory of this deed, a hand holding a dagger, with the memorable words, "I make sicker."

*Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye.*—P. 312.

These knights are enumerated by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents, who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven.

"With him was a bold baron,
Schy'r William the Baroundoun,
Schy'r Gilbert de la Haye alsua."

There were more than one of the noble family of Hay engaged in Bruce's cause; but the principal was Gilbert de la Haye, Lord of Errol, a stanch adherent to King Robert's interest, and whom he rewarded by creating him hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland, a title which he used 16th March, 1308, where, in a letter from the peers of Scotland to Philip the Fair of France, he is designed *Gilbertus de Hay Constabularius Scotiæ*. He was slain at the battle of Halidoun-hill. Hugh de la Haye, his brother, was made prisoner at the battle of Methven.

Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strains.—P. 312.

The character of the Highland bards, however high in an earlier period of society, seems soon to have degenerated. The Irish affirm, that in their kindred tribes severe laws became necessary to restrain their avarice. In the Highlands they seem gradually to have sunk into contempt, as well as the orators, or men of speech, with whose office that of family poet was often united.—"The orators, in their language called Isdane, were in high esteem both in these islands and the continent; until within these forty years, they sat always among the nobles and chiefs of families in the streah, or circle. Their houses and little villages were sanctuaries, as well as churches, and they took place before doctors of physick. The orators, after the Druids were extinct, were brought in to preserve the genealogy of families, and to repeat the same at every succession of chiefs; and upon the occasion of marriages and births, they made epithalamiums and panegyricks, which the poet or bard pronounced. The orators, by the force of their eloquence had a powerful ascendant over the greatest men in their time; for if any orator did but ask the habit, arms, horse, or any other thing belonging to the greatest man in these islands, it was readily granted them, sometimes out of respect, and sometimes for fear of being exclaimed against by a satyre, which, in those days, was reckoned a great dishonour. But these gentlemen becoming insolent, lost ever since both the profit and esteem which was formerly due to their character; for neither their panegyricks nor satyres are regarded to what they have been, and they are now allowed but a small salary. I must not omit to relate their way of study, which is very singular: They shut their doors and windows for a day's time, and lie on their

backs, with a stone upon their belly, and plads about their heads, and their eyes being covered, they pump their brains for rhetorical encomium or panegyrick; and indeed they furnish such a style from this dark cell as is understood by very few; and if they purchase a couple of horses as the reward of their meditation, they think they have done a great matter. The poet, or bard, had a title to the bridegroom's upper garb, that is, the plaid and bonnet; but now he is satisfied with what the bridegroom pleases to give him on such occasions."—MARTIN'S *Western Isles*.

*Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour.*—P. 317.

It was anciently customary in the Highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband. Nay, in some cases the complaisance was stretched so far, that she remained there upon trial for a twelvemonth; and the bridegroom, even after this period of cohabitation, retained an option of refusing to fulfil his engagement. It is said that a desperate feud ensued between the clans of Mac-Donald of Sleate and Mac-Leod, owing to the former chief having availed himself of this license to send back to Dunvegan a sister, or daughter of the latter. Mac-Leod, resenting the indignity, observed, that since there was no wedding bonfire, there should be one to solemnise the divorce. Accordingly, he burned and laid waste the territories of Mac-Donald, who retaliated, and a deadly feud, with all its accompaniments, took place in form.

*Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green.*—P. 317.

Stow gives the following curious account of the trial and execution of this celebrated patriot:—"William Wallace, who had oft-times set Scotland in great trouble, was taken and brought to London, with great numbers of men and women wondering upon him. He was lodged in the house of William Delect, a citizen of London, in Fenchurch-street. On the morrow, being the eve of St. Bartholomew, he was brought on horseback to Westminster. John Legrave and Geffrey, knights, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of London, and many others, both on horseback and on foot, accompanying him; and in the great hall at Westminster, he being placed on the south bench, crowned with laurel, for that he had said in times past that he ought to bear a crown in that hall, as it was commonly reported; and being appeached for a traitor by Sir Peter Malorie, the king's justice, he answered, that he was never traitor to the King of England; but for other things whereof he was accused, he confessed them; and was after headed and quartered."—Srow, *Chr.* p. 209. There is something singularly doubtful about the mode in which Wallace was taken. That he was betrayed to the English is indubitable; and popular fame charges Sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy. "Accursed," says Arnold Blair, "be the day of nativity of John de Menteith, and may his name be struck out of the book of life." But John de Menteith was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and was governor of Dumbarton Castle by commission from Edward the First; and therefore, as the accurate Lord Hailes has observed, could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be. The truth seems to be, that Menteith, thoroughly engaged in the English interest, pursued Wallace closely, and made him prisoner through the treachery of an attendant, whom Peter Langtoft calls Jack Short.

" William Waleis is nomen that master of theves,
 Tiding to the king is comen that robbery mischeives,
 Sir John of Menetest sued William so nigh,
 He tok him when he ween'd least, on night, his leman him by,
 That was through treason of *Jack Short* his man,
 He was the encheson that Sir John so him ran,
 Jack's brother had he slain, the Walleis that is said,
 The more Jack was fain to do William that braid."

From this it would appear that the infamy of seizing Wallace must rest between a degenerate Scottish nobleman, the vassal of England, and a domestic, the obscure agent of his treachery; between Sir John Menteith, son of Walter, Earl of Menteith, and the traitor Jack Short.

*Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
 And valiant Seton—where are they?
 Where Somerville, the kind and free?
 And Fraser, flower of chivalry?* —P. 317.

When these lines were written, the author was remote from the means of correcting his indistinct recollection concerning the individual fate of Bruce's followers, after the battle of Methven. Hugh de la Haye, and Thomas Somerville of Lintoun and Cowdally, ancestor of Lord Somerville, were both made prisoners at that defeat, but neither was executed.

Sir Nigel Bruce was the younger brother of Robert, to whom he committed the charge of his wife and daughter, Marjorie, and the defence of his strong castle of Kildrummie, near the head of the Don, in Aberdeenshire, Kildrummie long resisted the arms of the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford, until the magazine was treacherously burnt. The garrison was then compelled to surrender at discretion, and Nigel Bruce, a youth remarkable for personal beauty, as well as for gallantry, fell into the hands of the unrelenting Edward. He was tried by a special commission at Berwick, was condemned, and executed.

Christopher Seatoun shared the same unfortunate fate. He also was distinguished by personal valour, and signalised himself in the fatal battle of Methven. Robert Bruce adventured his person in that battle like a knight of romance. He dismounted Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, but was in his turn dismounted by Sir Philip Mowbray. In this emergence Seatoun came to his aid, and remounted him. Langtoft mentions, that in this battle the Scottish wore white surplices, or shirts, over their armour, that those of rank might not be known. In this manner both Bruce and Seatoun escaped. But the latter was afterwards betrayed to the English, through means, according to Barbour, of one MacNab, "a disciple of Judas," in whom the unfortunate knight reposed entire confidence. There was some peculiarity respecting his punishment; because, according to Matthew of Westminster, he was considered not as a Scottish subject, but an Englishman. He was therefore taken to Dumfries, where he was tried, condemned, and executed, for the murder of a soldier slain by him. His brother, John de Seton, had the same fate at Newcastle; both were considered as accomplices in the slaughter of Comyn, but in what manner they were particularly accessory to that deed does not appear.

The fate of Sir Simon Fraser, or Frizel, ancestor of the family of Lovat, is dwelt upon at great length, and with savage exultation, by the English historians. This knight, who was renowned for personal gallantry, and high deeds of chivalry, was also made prisoner, after a gallant defence, in the battle of Methven.

*Was not the life of Athole shed,
To soothe the tyrant's sickened bed.*—P. 318.

John de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed, with circumstances of great barbarity, being first half strangled, then let down from the gallows while yet alive, barbarously dismembered, and his body burnt. It may surprise the reader to learn, that this was a *mitigated* punishment; for in respect that his mother was a grand-daughter of King John, by his natural son Richard, he was not drawn on a sledge to execution, "that point was forgiven," and he made the passage on horseback. Matthew of Westminster tells us that King Edward, then extremely ill, received great ease from the news that his relative was apprehended. "*Quo audito, Rex Angliæ, etsi gravissimo morbo tunc langueret, levius tamen tulit dolorem.*" To this singular expression the text alludes.

*And must his word, till dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay.*—P. 318.

This alludes to a passage in Barbour, singularly expressive of the vindictive spirit of Edward I. The prisoners taken at the castle of Kildrummie had surrendered upon condition that they should be at King Edward's disposal. "But his will," says Barbour, "was always evil towards Scottishmen." The news of the surrender of Kildrummie arrived when he was in his mortal sickness at Burgh-upon-Sands.

"And when he to the death was near,
The folk that at Kyldromy wer
Come with prisoners that they had tane,
And syne to the king are gane.
And for to comfort him they tauld
How they the castell to them yauld;
And how they till his will were brought,
To do off that whatever he thought;
And ask'd what men should off them do.
Then look'd he angryly them to,
He said, grinning, 'HANGS AND DRAWS.'
That was wonder of sic saws,
That he, that to the death was near,
Should answer upon sic maner,
Forouten moaning and mercy;
How might he trust on him to cry,
That sooth-fastly dooms all thing
To have mercy for his crying,
Off him that, throw his felony,
Into sic point had no mercy?"

There was much truth in the Leonine couplet, with which Matthew of Westminster concludes his encomium on the first Edward:—

"Scotos Edwardus, dum vixit, suppeditavit,
Tenuit, afflixit, depressit, dilaniavit."

*While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and lance.*—P. 319.

Bruce uniformly professed, and probably felt, compunction for having violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn;

and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, be requested James Lord Douglas to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre.

*De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head.*—P. 320.

So soon as the notice of Comyn's slaughter reached Rome, Bruce and his adherents were excommunicated. It was published first by the Archbishop of York, and renewed at different times, particularly by Lambyrton, Bishop of St. Andrews, in 1308; but it does not appear to have answered the purpose which the English monarch expected. Indeed, for reasons which it may be difficult to trace, the thunders of Rome descended upon the Scottish mountains with less effect than in more fertile countries. Probably the comparative poverty of the benefices occasioned that fewer foreign clergy settled in Scotland; and the interest of the native churchmen were linked with that of their country. Many of the Scottish prelates, Lambyrton the primate particularly, declared for Bruce, while he was yet under the ban of the church, although he afterwards changed sides.

*I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be repress'd.*—P. 320.

Bruce, like other heroes, observed omens, and one is recorded by tradition. After he had retreated to one of the miserable places of shelter, in which he could venture to take some repose after his disasters, he lay stretched upon a handful of straw, and abandoned himself to his melancholy meditations. He had now been defeated four times, and was upon the point of resolving to abandon all hopes of further opposition to his fate, and to go to the Holy Land. It chanced, his eye, while he was thus pondering, was attracted by the exertions of a spider, who, in order to fix his web, endeavoured to swing himself from one beam to another above his head. Involuntarily he became interested in the pertinacity with which the insect renewed his exertions after failing six times; and it occurred to him that he would decide his own course according to the success or failure of the spider. At the seventh effort the insect gained his object; and Bruce, in like manner, persevered and carried his own. Hence it has been held unlucky or ungrateful, or both, in one of the name of Bruce to kill a spider.

*A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled.*—P. 320.

This is not metaphorical. The echoes of Scotland did actually

——— “ring
With the bloodhounds that bayed for her fugitive king.”

A very curious and romantic tale is told by Barbour upon this subject. —See BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, Book v., v. 391.

*For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.*—P. 322.

A sort of persons common in the isles, as may be easily believed, until the introduction of civil polity. Witness the Dean of the Isles' account of Ronay. “At the north end of Raarsay, be half myle of sea frae it, layes ane ile callit Ronay, maire then a myle in lengthe, full of wood and heddir, with ane havein for heiland galeys in the middis of

it, and the same havein is guid for fostering of theives, ruggairs, and reivairs, till a nail, upon the peilling and spulzeing of poor pepill. This ile pertains to M'Gillychallan of Raarsay by force, and to the bishope of the iles be heritage."—SIR DONALD MONRO'S *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1805, p. 22.

For Falkirk's woes

Upon his conscious soul arose.—P. 324.

I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition, that Bruce fought against Wallace, and the array of Scotland, at the fatal battle of Falkirk. The story, which seems to have no better authority than that of Blind Harry, bears, that having made much slaughter during the engagement, he sat down to dine with the conquerors without washing the filthy witness from his hands.

"Fasting he was, and had been in great need,
Blooded were all his weapons and his weed;
Southeron lords scorn'd him in terms rude,
And said, Behold yon Scot eats his own blood.

"Then rued he sore, for reason bad be known,
That blood and land alike should be his own;
With them he long was, ere he got away,
But contrair Scots he fought not from that day."

These are the savage wilds that lie

North of Strathnardill and Dunskey.—P. 326.

The extraordinary piece of scenery which I have here attempted to describe is, I think, unparalleled in any part of Scotland, at least in any which I have happened to visit. It lies just upon the frontier of the Laird of Mac-Leod's country, which is thereabouts divided from the estate of Mr. Maccalister of Strath-Aird, called Strathnardill by the Dean of the Isles. The following account of it is extracted from a journal kept during a tour through the Scottish islands:—

"The western coast of Sky is highly romantic, and at the same time displays a richness of vegetation in the lower grounds to which we have hitherto been strangers. We passed three salt-water lochs, or deep embayments, called Loch Bracadale, Loch Einort, and Loch —, and about 11 o'clock opened Loch Slavig. We were now under the western termination of the high ridge of mountains called Cuillen, or Quillin, or Coolin, whose weather-beaten and serrated peaks we had admired at a distance from Dunvegan. They sunk here upon the sea, but with the same bold and peremptory aspect which their distant appearance indicated. They appeared to consist of precipitous sheets of naked rock, down which the torrents were leaping in a hundred lines of foam. The tops of the ridge, apparently inaccessible to human foot, were rent and split into the most tremendous pinnacles. Towards the base of these bare and precipitous crags, the ground, enriched by the soil washed down from them, is comparatively verdant and productive. Where we passed within the small isle of Soa, we entered Loch Slavig, under the shoulder of one of these grisly mountains, and observed that the opposite side of the loch was of a milder character, the mountains being softened down into steep green declivities. From the bottom of the bay advanced a headland of high rocks, which divided its depth into two recesses, from each of which a brook issued. Here it had been intimated to us we would find some romantic scenery; but we were uncertain up which inlet we should proceed in search of it. We chose,

against our better judgment, the southerly dip of the bay, where we saw a house which might afford us information. We found, upon inquiry, that there is a lake adjoining to each branch of the bay; and walked a couple of miles to see that near the farm-house, merely because the honest Highlander seemed jealous of the honour of his own loch, though we were speedily convinced it was not that which we were recommended to examine. It had no particular merit, excepting from its neighbourhood to a very high cliff, or precipitous mountain, otherwise the sheet of water had nothing differing from any ordinary low-country lake. We returned and re-embarked in our boat, for our guide shook his head at our proposal to climb over the peninsula, or rocky headland which divided the two lakes. In rowing round the headland, we were surprised at the infinite number of sea-fowl, then busy apparently with a shoal of fish.

"Arrived at the depth of the bay, we found that the discharge from this second lake forms a sort of waterfall, or rather a rapid stream, which rushes down to the sea with great fury and precipitation. Round this place were assembled hundreds of trouts and salmon, struggling to get up into the fresh water: with a net we might have had twenty salmon at a haul; and a sailor, with no better hook than a crooked pin, caught a dish of trouts during our absence. Advancing up this huddling and riotous brook, we found ourselves in a most extraordinary scene; we lost sight of the sea almost immediately after we had climbed over a low ridge of crags, and were surrounded by mountains of naked rock, of the boldest and most precipitous character. The ground on which we walked was the margin of a lake, which seemed to have sustained the constant ravage of torrents from these rude neighbours. The shores consisted of huge strata of naked granite, here and there intermixed with bogs, and heaps of gravel and sand piled in the empty water-courses. Vegetation there was little or none; and the mountains rose so perpendicularly from the water edge, that Borrowdale, or even Glencoe, is a jest to them. We proceeded a mile and a half up this deep, dark, and solitary lake, which was about two miles long, half a mile broad, and is, as we learned, of extreme depth. The murky vapours which enveloped the mountain ridges obliged us by assuming a thousand varied shapes, changing their drapery into all sorts of forms, and sometimes clearing off all together. It is true, the mist made us pay the penalty by some heavy and downright showers, from the frequency of which a Highland boy, whom we brought from the farm, told us the lake was popularly called the Water-kettle. The proper name in Loch Corriskin, from the deep corrie, or hollow, in the mountains of Cuilin, which affords the basin for this wonderful sheet of water. It is as exquisite a savage scene as Loch Katrine is a scene of romantic beauty. After having penetrated so far as distinctly to observe the termination of the lake under an immense precipice, which rises abruptly from the water, we returned, and often stopped to admire the ravages which storms must have made in these recesses, where all human witnesses were driven to places of more shelter and security. Stones, or rather large masses and fragments of rocks of a composite kind, perfectly different from the strata of the lake, were scattered upon the bare rocky beach, in the strangest and most precarious situations, as if abandoned by the torrents which had borne them down from above. Some lay loose and tottering upon the ledges of the natural rock, with so little security, that the slightest push moved them, though their weight might exceed many tons. These detached rocks, or stones, were chiefly what is called plum-pudding stones. The bare rocks, which formed the shore of the lakes, were a species of granite. The opposite side of the lake seemed quite pathless and inaccessible, as a huge mountain, one of the detached ridges of the Cuilin hills, sinks

in a profound and perpendicular precipice down to the water. On the left-hand side, which we traversed, rose a higher and equally inaccessible mountain, the top of which strongly resembled the shivered crater of an exhausted volcano. I never saw a spot in which there was less appearance of vegetation of any kind. The eye rested on nothing but barren and naked crags, and the rocks on which we walked by the side of the loch, were as bare as the pavements of Cheapside. There are one or two small islets in the loch, which seem to bear juniper, or some such low bushy shrub. Upon the whole, though I have seen many scenes of more extensive desolation, I never witnessed any in which it pressed more deeply upon the eye and the heart than at Loch Corriskin; at the same time that its grandeur elevated and redeemed it from the wild and dreary character of utter barrenness."

*Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-look'd, unwilling to be seen.*—P. 329.

The story of Bruce's meeting the banditti is copied, with such alterations as the fictitious narrative rendered necessary, from a striking incident in the monarch's history, told by Barbour.—See *The Bruce*, Book v., v. 405.

*And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless well,
Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell.*—P. 334.

Imagination can hardly conceive anything more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Alexander Mac-Allister, Esq. of Strathaird. It has since been much and deservedly celebrated, and a full account of its beauties has been published by Dr. Mac-Leay of Oban. The general impression may perhaps be gathered from the following extract from a journal, which, written under the feelings of the moment, is likely to be more accurate than any attempt to recollect the impressions then received.—"The first entrance to this celebrated cave is rude and unpromising; but the light of the torches, with which we were provided, was soon reflected from the roof, floor, and walls, which seem as if they were sheeted with marble, partly smooth, partly rough with frost-work and rustic ornaments, and partly seeming to be wrought into statuary. The floor forms a steep and difficult ascent, and might be fancifully compared to a sheet of water, which, while it rushed whitening and foaming down a declivity, had been suddenly arrested and consolidated by the spell of an enchanter. Upon attaining the summit of this ascent, the cave opens into a splendid gallery, adorned with the most dazzling crystalisations, and finally descends with rapidity to the brink of a pool, of the most limpid water, about four or five yards broad. There opens beyond this pool a portal arch, formed by two columns of white spar, with beautiful chasing upon the sides, which promises a continuation of the cave. One of our sailors swam across, for there is no other mode of passing, and informed us (as indeed we partly saw by the light he carried) that the enchantment of Macalister's cave terminates with this portal, a little beyond which there was only a rude cavern, speedily choked with stones and earth. But the pool, on the brink of which we stood, surrounded by the most fanciful mouldings, in a substance resembling white marble, and distinguished by the depth and purity of its waters, might have been the bathing grotto of a naiad.

*Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, Heaven, belongs
My joy o'er Edward's bier.*—P. 338.

The generosity which does justice to the character of an enemy, often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour. He seldom mentions a fallen enemy without praising such good qualities as he might possess. I shall only take one instance. Shortly after Bruce landed in Carrick, in 1306, Sir Ingram Bell, the English governor of Ayr engaged a wealthy yeoman, who had hitherto been a follower of Bruce, to undertake the task of assassinating him. The King learned this treachery, as he is said to have done other secrets of the enemy, by means of a female with whom he had an intrigue. Shortly after he was possessed of this information, Bruce, resorting to a small thicket at a distance from his men, with only a single page to attend him, met the traitor, accompanied by two of his sons. They approached him with their wonted familiarity, but Bruce, taking his page's bow and arrow, commanded them to keep at a distance. As they still pressed forward with professions of zeal for his person and service, he, after a second warning, shot the father with the arrow; and being assaulted successively by the two sons, despatched first one, who was armed with an axe, then as the other charged him with a spear, avoided the thrust, struck the head from the spear, and cleft the skull of the assassin with a blow of his two-handed sword.

" He rushed down of blood all red,
And when the king saw they were dead,
All three lying, he wiped his brand.
With that his boy came fast running,
And said, ' Our lord might lowyt ¹ be
That granted you might and poweste ²
To fell the felony and the pride,
Of three in so little tide.'
The king said, ' So our lord me see,
They have been worthy men all three,
Had they not been full of treason:
But that made their confusion.' "

BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, Book v. p. 152.

*Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's land.*—P. 338.

To establish his dominion in Scotland had been a favourite object of Edward's ambition, and nothing could exceed the pertinacity with which he pursued it, unless his inveterate resentment against the insurgents, who so frequently broke the English yoke when he deemed it most firmly riveted. After the battles of Falkirk and Methven, and the dreadful examples which he had made of Wallace and other champions of national independence, he probably concluded every chance of insurrection was completely annihilated. This was in 1306, when Bruce, as we have seen, was utterly expelled from Scotland: yet, in the conclusion of the same year, Bruce was again in arms and formidable; and in 1307, Edward, though exhausted by a long and wasting malady, put himself at the head of the army destined to destroy him utterly. This was, perhaps, partly in consequence of a vow which he had taken upon him, with all the pomp of chivalry, upon the day

¹ Lauded.

² Power.

in which he dubbed his son a knight, for which see a subsequent note. But even his spirit of vengeance was unable to restore his exhausted strength. He reached Burgh-upon-Sands, a petty village of Cumberland, on the shores of the Solway Firth, and there, 6th July, 1307, expired in sight of the detested and devoted country of Scotland. His dying injunctions to his son required him to continue the Scottish war, and never to recall Gaveston. Edward II. disobeyed both charges. Yet, more to mark his animosity, the dying monarch ordered his bones to be carried with the invading army.

It ought to be observed, that though the order of the incidents is reversed in the poem, yet, in point of historical accuracy, Bruce had landed in Scotland, and obtained some successes of consequence, before the death of Edward I.

——— *Canna's tower, that, steep and grey,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.*—P. 340.

The little island of Canna, or Cannay, adjoins to those of Rum and Muick, with which it forms one parish. In a pretty bay opening towards the east, there is a lofty and slender rock detached from the shore. Upon the summit are the ruins of a very small tower, scarcely accessible by a steep and precipitous path. Here, it is said, one of the kings, or Lords of the Isles, confined a beautiful lady, of whom he was jealous. The ruins are of course haunted by her restless spirit, and many romantic stories are told by the aged people of the island concerning her fate in life, and her appearances after death.

*And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
Their hunters to the shore.*—P. 341.

Ronin (popularly called Rum, a name which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding if possible) is a very rough and mountainous island, adjacent to those of Eigg and Cannay. There is almost no arable ground upon it, so that, except in the plenty of the deer, which of course are now nearly extirpated, it still deserves the description bestowed by the archdean of the Isles. "Ronin, sixteen myle north-wast from the ile of Coll, lyes ane ile callit Ronin Ile, of sixteen myle long, and six in bredthe in the narrowest, ane forest of heigh mountains, and abundance of little deir in it, quhilk deir will never be slane dounewith, but the principal saittis man be in the height of the hill, because the deir will be callit upwart ay be the tainchell, or without tynchel they will pass upwart perforce. In this ile will be gotten about Britane als many wild nests upon the plane mure as men pleasis to gadder, and yet by resson the fowls hes few to start them except deir. This ile lyes from the west to the eist in lenth, and pertains to M'Kenabrey of Colla. Many solan geese are in this ile."—MONRO's *Description of the Western Isles*, p. 18.

*On Scooreigg next a warning light
Summon'd her warriors to the fight ;
A numerous race, ere stern MacLeod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode.*—P. 342.

These, and the following lines of the stanza, refer to a dreadful tale of feudal vengeance, of which unfortunately there are relics that still attest the truth. Scoor-Eigg is a high peak in the centre of the small Isle of Eigg, or Egg. It is well known to mineralogists, as affording many interesting specimens, and to others whom chance or curiosity may lead to the island, for the astonishing view of the mainland and

neighbouring isles, which it commands. I shall again avail myself of the journal I have quoted.

"26th August, 1814.—At seven this morning we were in the Sound which divides the Isle of Rum from that of Eigg. The latter, although hilly and rocky, and traversed by a remarkably high and barren ridge, called Scoor-Rigg, has, in point of soil, a much more promising appearance. Southward of both lies the Isle of Muich, or Muck, a low and fertile island, and though the least, yet probably the most valuable of the three. We manned the boat, and rowed along the shore of Eigg in quest of a cavern, which had been the memorable scene of a horrid feudal vengeance. We had rounded more than half the island, admiring the entrance of many a bold natural cave, which its rocks exhibited, without finding that which we sought, until we procured a guide. Nor, indeed, was it surprising that it should have escaped the search of strangers, as there are no outward indications more than might distinguish the entrance of a fox-earth. This noted cave has a very narrow opening, through which one can hardly creep on his knees and hands. It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 measured feet; the height at the entrance may be about three feet, but rises within to eighteen or twenty, and the breadth may vary in the same proportion. The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewn with the bones of men, women, and children, the sad relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island, 200 in number, who were slain on the following occasion:—The Mac-Donalds of the Isle of Eigg, a people dependent on Clan-Ranald, had done some injury to the Laird of Mac-Leod. The tradition of the isle says, that it was by a personal attack on the chieftain, in which his back was broken. But that of the other isles bears, more probably, that the injury was offered to two or three of the Mac-Leods, who, landing upon Eigg, and using some freedom with the young women, were seized by the islanders, bound hand and foot, and turned adrift in a boat, which the winds and waves safely conducted to Skye. To avenge the offence given, Mac-Leod sailed with such a body of men, as rendered resistance hopeless. The natives, fearing his vengeance, concealed themselves in this cavern, and, after a strict search, the Mac-Leods went on board their galleys, after doing what mischief they could, concluding the inhabitants had left the isle, and betaken themselves to the Long Island, or some of Clan-Ranald's other possessions. But next morning they espied from the vessels a man upon the island, and immediately landing again, they traced his retreat by the marks of his footsteps, a light snow being unhappily on the ground. Mac-Leod then surrounded the cavern, summoned the subterranean garrison, and demanded that the individuals who had offended him should be delivered up to him. This was peremptorily refused. The chieftain then caused his people to divert the course of a rill of water, which, falling over the entrance of the cave, would have prevented his purposed vengeance. He then kindled at the entrance of the cavern a huge fire, composed of turf and fern, and maintained it with unrelenting assiduity, until all within were destroyed by suffocation. The date of this dreadful deed must have been recent, if one may judge from the fresh appearance of those relics. I brought off, in spite of the prejudice of our sailors, a skull from among the numerous specimens of mortality which the cavern afforded. Before re-embarking we visited another cave, opening to the sea, but of a character entirely different, being a large open vault, as high as that of a cathedral, and running back a great way into the rock at the same height. The height and width of the opening gives ample light to the whole. Here, after 1745, when the Catholic priests were scarcely tolerated, the priest of Eigg used to perform the Roman Catholic service, most of the islanders being of that persuasion. A huge ledge

of rocks rising about half way up one side of the vault, served for altar and pulpit; and the appearance of a priest and Highland congregation in such an extraordinary place of worship, might have engaged the pencil of Salvator."

———*that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples deck'd
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise!*—P. 342.

It would be unpardonable to detain the reader upon a wonder so often described, and yet so incapable of being understood by description. This palace of Neptune is even grander upon a second than the first view. The stupendous columns which form the sides of the cave, the depth and strength of the tide which rolls its deep and heavy swell up to the extremity of the vault—the variety of the tints formed by white, crimson, and yellow stalactites, or petrifications, which occupy the vacancies between the base of the broken pillars which form the roof, and intersect them with a rich, curious and variegated chasing, occupying each interstice—the corresponding variety below water, where the ocean rolls over a dark-red or violet-coloured rock, from which, as from a base, the basaltic columns arise—the tremendous noise of the swelling tide, mingling with the deep-toned echoes of the vault,—are circumstances elsewhere unparalleled.

Nothing can be more interesting than the varied appearance of the little archipelago of islets, of which Staffa is the most remarkable. This group, called in Gaelic Tresharnish, affords a thousand varied views to the voyager, as they appear in different positions with reference to his course. The variety of their shape contributes much to the beauty of these effects.

Scenes sung by him who sings no more.—P. 343.

The ballad, entitled "Macphail of Colonsay, and the Mermaid of Corrievrekin" [See *Border Minstrelsy*, vol. iv. p. 285] was composed by John Leyden, from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801, soon before his fatal departure for India, where, after having made farther progress in Oriental literature than any man of letters who had embraced those studies, he died a martyr to his zeal for knowledge in the island of Java, immediately after the landing of our forces near Batavia, in August 1811.

*Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er.*—P. 343.

The peninsula of Cantire is joined to South Knapdale by a very narrow isthmus, formed by the western and eastern Loch of Tarbat. These two saltwater lakes, or bays, encroach so far upon the land, and the extremities come so near to each other, that there is not above a mile of land to divide them.

"It is not long," says Pennant, "since vessels of nine or ten tons were drawn by horses out of the west loch into that of the east, to avoid the dangers of the Mull of Cantyre, so dreaded and so little known was the navigation round the promontory. It is the opinion of many, that these little isthmuses, so frequently styled Tarbat in North Britain, took their name from the above circumstance; Tarruing, signifying to draw, and Bata, a boat. This too might be called, by way of pre-eminence, the Tarbat, from a very singular circumstance related by

Torfoeus. When Magnus, the barefooted king of Norway, obtained from Donald-bane of Scotland the cession of the Western Isles, or all those places that could be surrounded in a boat, he added to them the peninsula of Cantyre by this fraud: he placed himself in the stern of a boat, held the rudder, was drawn over this narrow track, and by this species of navigation wrested the country from his brother monarch."—PENNANT'S *Scotland, London, 1790, p. 190.*

But that Bruce also made this passage, although at a period two or three years later than in the poem, appears from the evidence of Barbour, who mentions also the effect produced upon the minds of the Highlanders, from the prophecies current amongst them.—See BARBOUR'S *Bruce, Book x., v. 821.*

*The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-Ghoil, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
And bade Loch Ranza smile.—P. 344.*

Loch Ranza is a beautiful bay, on the northern extremity of Arran, opening towards East Tarbat Loch. It is well described by Pennant:—"The approach was magnificent; a fine bay in front, about a mile deep, having a ruined castle near the lower end, on a low far projecting neck of land, that forms another harbour, with a narrow passage; but within has three fathom of water, even at the lowest ebb. Beyond is a little plain watered by a stream, and inhabited by the people of a small village. The whole is environed with a theatre of mountains; and in the background the serrated crags of Grianan-Athol soar above."—PENNANT'S *Tour to the Western Isles, pp. 191-2.* Ben-Ghaoil "the mountain of the winds," is generally known by its English, and less poetical name, of Goatfield.

*Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring;
That blast was winded by the King!—P. 347.*

The passage in Barbour, describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognised by Douglas and those of his followers who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting.—The king arrived in Arran with thirty-three small row-boats. He interrogated a female if there had arrived any warlike men of late in that country. "Surely, sir," she replied, "I can tell you of many who lately came hither, discomfited the English governor, and blockaded his castle of Brodick. They maintain themselves in a wood at no great distance." The king, truly conceiving that this must be Douglas and his followers, who had lately set forth to try their fortune in Arran, desired the woman to conduct him to the wood. She obeyed.

"The king then blew his horn on high;
And gert his men that were him by,
Hold them still, and all privy;
And syne again his horne blew he.
James of Dowglas heard him blow,
And at the last alone gan know,
And said, 'Soothly yon is the king;
I know long while since his blowing.'
The third time therewithall he blew,
And then Sir Robert Boid it knew;
And said, 'Yon is the king, but dread,
Go we forth till him, better speed.'
Then went they till the king in hye,

And him inclined courteously,
 And blithely welcomed them the king,
 And was joyful of their meeting,
 And kissed them; and speared ¹ syne
 How they had fared in hunting?
 And they him told all, but lesing: ²
 Syne laud they God of their meeting.
 Syne with the king till his harbourye
 Went both joyfu' and jolly."

BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, Book v., pp. 115, 116.

And dash'd away the tear he scorn'd.—P. 348.

The kind, and yet fiery character of Edward Bruce, is well painted by Barbour, in the account of his behaviour after the battle of Bannockburn. Sir Walter Ross, one of the very few Scottish nobles who fell in that battle, was so dearly beloved by Edward, that he wished the victory had been lost, so Ross had lived.

"Out-taken him, men has not seen
 Where he for any men made moaning."

And here the venerable Archdeacon intimates a piece of scandal. Sir Edward Bruce, it seems, loved Ross's sister, *par amours*, to the neglect of his own lady, sister to David de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole. This criminal passion had evil consequences; for, in resentment to the affront done to his sister, Athole attacked the guard which Bruce had left at Cambuskenneth, during the battle of Bannockburn, to protect his magazine of provisions, and slew Sir William Keith, the commander. For which treason he was forfeited.

In like manner, when in a sally from Carrickfergus, Niel Fleming, and the guards whom he commanded, had fallen, after the protracted resistance which saved the rest of Edward Bruce's army, he made such moan as surprised his followers:

"Sic moan he made men had ferly,³
 For he was not customably
 Wont for to moan men any thing,
 Nor would not hear men make moaning."

Such are the nice traits of character so often lost in general history.

*O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
 Craved wary eye and ample stride.*—P. 356.

The interior of the island of Arran abounds with beautiful Highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataracts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth. There is one pass over the river Machrai, renowned for the dilemma of a poor woman, who, being tempted by the narrowness of the ravine to step across, succeeded in making the first movement, but took fright when it became necessary to move the other foot, and remained in a posture equally ludicrous and dangerous, until some chance passenger assisted her to extricate herself. It is said she remaned there some hours.

¹ Asked.

² Without lying.

³ Wonder.

*He cross'd his brow beside the stone
Where Druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled.*—P. 356.

The Isle of Arran, like those of Man and Anglesea, abounds with many relics of heathen, and probably Druidical, superstition. There are high erect columns of unhewn stone, the most early of all monuments, the circles of rude stones, commonly entitled Druidical, and the cairns, or sepulchral piles, within which are usually found urns enclosing ashes. Much doubt necessarily rests upon the history of such monuments, nor is it possible to consider them as exclusively Celtic or Druidical. By much the finest circles of standing stones, excepting Stonehenge, are those of Stenhouse, at Stennis, in the island of Pomona, the principal isle of the Orcades. These, of course, are neither Celtic nor Druidical; and we are assured that many circles of the kind occur both in Sweden and Norway.

*Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen ;
From Hastings, late their English Lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.*—P. 356.

Brodick or Brathwick Castle, in the Isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodick-Bay, and not far distant from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the Island of Lamlash. This important place had been assailed a short time before Bruce's arrival in the island. James Lord Douglas, who accompanied Bruce to his retreat in Rachrine, seems, in the spring of 1306, to have tired of his abode there, and set out accordingly, in the phrase of the times, to see what adventure God would send him. Sir Robert Boyd accompanied him; and his knowledge of the localities of Arran appears to have directed his course thither. They landed in the island privately, and appear to have laid an ambush for Sir John Hastings, the English governor of Brodick, and surprised a considerable supply of arms and provisions, and nearly took the castle itself. Indeed, that they actually did so has been generally averred by historians, although it does not appear from the narrative of Barbour. On the contrary, it would seem that they took shelter within a fortification of the ancient inhabitants, a rampart called *Tor an Schian*. When they were joined by Bruce, it seems probable that they had gained Brodick Castle. At least tradition says, that from the battlements of the tower he saw the supposed signal-fire on Turnberry-nook. . . . The castle is now much modernised, but has a dignified appearance, being surrounded by flourishing plantations.

*Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears,
A language much unmeet he hears.*—P. 357.

Barbour, with great simplicity, gives an anecdote, from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was, at this time, confined to military men. As Douglas, after Bruce's return to Scotland, was roving about the mountainous country of Tweeddale, near the water of Line, he chanced to hear some persons in a farm-house say "*the devil*." Concluding, from this hardy expression, that the house contained warlike guests, he immediately assailed it, and had the good fortune to make prisoners Thomas Randolph, afterwards the famous Earl of Murray, and

Alexander Stuart, Lord Bonkle. Both were then in the English interest, and had come into that country with the purpose of driving out Douglas. They afterwards ranked among Bruce's most zealous adherents.

*For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guards carelessly our father's hall.—P. 358.*

The remarkable circumstances by which Bruce was induced to enter Scotland, under the false idea that a signal-fire was lighted upon the shore near his maternal castle of Turnberry—the disappointment which he met with, and the train of success which arose out of that very disappointment, are too curious to be passed over unnoticed. The following is the narrative of Barbour. The introduction is a favourable specimen of his style, which seems to be in some degree the model for that of Gawain Douglas:—

“ This wes in ver,¹ quhen wynter tid,
With his blastis hidwyss to bid,
Was our drywyn: and byrdis smale,
As turturis and the nycthyngale,
Begouth² rycht sariely³ to syng;
And for to mak in thair singyng
Swete notis, and sownys ser,⁴
And melodys plesand to her.
And the treis begouth to ma⁵
Burgeans,⁶ and brycht blomys alsua,
To wyn the helyng⁷ off thair hewid,
That wykkyt wyntir had thaim rewid.⁸
And all gressys beguth to spryng.
In to that tyme the nobill king,
With his flote, and a few menye,⁹
Thre hundyr I trow thai mycht be,
Is to the se, owte off Arane
A litill forouth,¹⁰ ewyn gane.

“ Thai rowit fast, with all thair mycht,
Till that apon thaim fell the nycht,
That woux myrk¹¹ apon gret maner,
Swa that thai wust nocht quhar thai wer.
For thai na nedill had, na stane;
Bot rowyt awayis in till ane,
Sterand all tyme apon the fyr.
That thai saw brynnand lycht and schyr.¹²
It wes bot auentur¹³ thaim led:
And they in schort tyme sa thaim sped,
That at the fyr arywyt thai;
And went to land bot mar delay.
And Cuthbert, that has sene the fyr,
Was full off angyr, and off ire:
For he durst nocht do it away;
And wes alsua downtand ay
That his lord suld pass to se.
Tharfor thair cummyn waytit he;
And met them at thair arywing.

¹ Spring.² Began.³ Loftily.⁴ Several.⁵ Make.⁶ Buds.⁷ Covering.⁸ Bereaved.⁹ Men.¹⁰ Before.¹¹ Dark.¹² Clear.¹³ Adventure.

He wes wele sone broucht to the King,
 That speryt at him how he had done.
 And he with sar hart tauld him sone,
 How that he fand nane weill luffand;
 Bot all war fayis, that he fand:
 And that the lord the Persy,
 With ner thre hundre in cumpany,
 Was in the castell thar besid,
 Fullfyllt off dispyt and prid.
 Bot ma than twa partis off his rowt
 War herberyt in the toune without;
 'And dyspytyt yow mar, Schir King,
 Than men may dispyt ony thing.'
 Than said the King, in full gret ire;
 'Tratour, quhy maid thow than the fyr?'—
 'A! Schyr,' said he, 'sa God me se!
 The fyr wes newyr maid for me.
 Na, or the nycht, I wyst it nocht;
 Bot fra I wyst it, weill I thoct
 That ye, and haly your menye,
 In hy¹ suld put yow to the se.
 For thi I cum to mete yow her,
 To tell perellys that may aper.' "

BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, Book iv., v. 1.

*Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
 Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight?—
 It ne'er was known.*—P. 362.

The following are the words of an ingenious correspondent, to whom I am obliged for much information respecting Turnberry and its neighbourhood. "The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick, relates to the fire seen by him from the Isle of Arran. It is still generally reported, and religiously believed by many, that this fire was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being; and it is said, that, for several centuries, the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the king first saw it from the turrets of Brodick Castle; and some go so far as to say, that if the exact time were known, it would be still seen. That this superstitious notion is very ancient, is evident from the place where the fire is said to have appeared, being called the Bogles' Brae, beyond the remembrance of man. In support of this curious belief, it is said that the practice of burning heath for the improvement of land was then unknown; that a spunkie (Jack o' lanthorn) could not have been seen across the breadth of the Firth of Clyde, between Ayrshire and Arran; and that the courier of Bruce was his kinsman, and never suspected of treachery."—Letter from Mr. Joseph Train, of Newton Stuart, author of an ingenious Collection of Poems, illustrative of many ancient Traditions in Galloway and Ayrshire, Edinburgh, 1814. [Mr. Train made a journey into Ayrshire at Sir Walter Scott's request, on purpose to collect accurate information for the Notes to this poem; and the reader will find more of the fruits of his labours in a following Note. This is the same gentleman whose friendly assistance is so often acknowledged in the Notes and Introductions of the Waverley Novels.]

¹ Haste.

*They gain'd the Chase, a wide domain
Left for the Castle's silvan reign.*—P. 363.

The Castle of Turnberry, on the coast of Ayrshire, was the property of Robert Bruce, in right of his mother. Lord Hailes mentions the following remarkable circumstance concerning the mode in which he became proprietor of it:—"Martha, Countess of Carrick in her own right, the wife of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, bare him a son, afterwards Robert I. (11th July, 1274). The circumstances of her marriage were singular: happening to meet Robert Bruce in her domains, she became enamoured of him, and with some violence led him to her castle of Turnberry. A few days after she married him, without the knowledge of the relations of either party, and without the requisite consent of the king. The king instantly seized her castle and whole estate. She afterwards atoned by a fine for her feudal delinquency. Little did Alexander foresee, that, from this union, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy was to arise."—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 180. The same obliging correspondent, whom I have quoted in the preceding note, gives me the following account of the present state of the ruins of Turnberry:—"Turnberry Point is a rock projecting into the sea; the top of it is about eighteen feet above high-water mark. Upon this rock was built the castle. There is about twenty-five feet high of the wall next to the sea yet standing. Upon the land-side the wall is only about four feet high; the length has been sixty feet, and the breadth forty-five. It was surrounded by a ditch, but that is now nearly filled up. The top of the ruin, rising between forty and fifty feet above the water, has a majestic appearance from the sea. There is not much local tradition in the vicinity connected with Bruce or his history. In front, however, of the rock, upon which stands Culzean Castle, is the mouth of a romantic cavern, called the Cove of Colean, in which it is said Bruce and his followers concealed themselves immediately after landing, till they arranged matters for their farther enterprises. Burns mentions it in the poem of Hallowe'en. The only place to the south of Turnberry worth mentioning, with reference to Bruce's history, is the Weary Nuik, a little romantic green hill, where he and his party are said to have rested, after assaulting the castle."

Around the Castle of Turnberry was a level plain of about two miles in extent, forming the castle park. There could be nothing, I am informed, more beautiful than the copsewood and verdure of this extensive meadow, before it was invaded by the ploughshare.

The Bruce hath won his father's hall!—P. 370.

I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate. The fact is, that he was only strong enough to alarm and drive in the outposts of the English garrison, then commanded, not by Clifford, as assumed in the text, but by Percy. Neither was Clifford slain upon this occasion, though he had several skirmishes with Bruce. He fell afterwards in the battle of Bannockburn. Bruce, after alarming the castle of Turnberry, and surprising some part of the garrison, who were quartered without the walls of the fortress, retreated into the mountainous part of Carrick, and there made himself so strong, that the English were obliged to evacuate Turnberry, and at length the Castle of Ayr. Many of his benefactions and royal gifts attest his attachment to the hereditary followers of his house, in this part of the country.

It is generally known that Bruce, in consequence of his distresses

after the battle of Methven, was affected by a scorbutic disorder, which was then called a leprosy. It is said he experienced benefit from the use of a medicinal spring, about a mile north of the town of Ayr, called from that circumstance King's Ease. The following is the tradition of the country collected by Mr. Train:—"After Robert ascended the throne, he founded the priory of Dominican monks, every one of whom was under the obligation of putting up to Heaven a prayer once every week-day, and twice in holydays, for the recovery of the king; and, after his death, these masses were continued for the saving of his soul. The ruins of this old monastery are now nearly level with the ground. Robert likewise caused houses to be built round the well of King's Case, for eight lepers, and allowed eight bolls of oatmeal, and £28 Scotch money, per annum, to each person. These donations were laid upon the lands of Fullarton, and are now payable by the Duke of Portland. The farm of Shiels, in the neighbourhood of Ayr, has to give, if required, a certain quantity of straw for the lepers' beds, and so much to thatch their houses annually. Each leprous person had a drinking horn provided him by the king, which continued to be hereditary in the house to which it was first granted. One of those identical horns, of very curious workmanship, was in the possession of the late Colonel Fullarton, of that ilk."

"*Bring here,*" he said, "*the mazers four,
My noble fathers loved of yore.*"—P. 370.

These mazers were large drinking-cups, or goblets. Mention of them occurs in a curious inventory of the treasure and jewels of James III., which will be published, with other curious documents of antiquity, by my friend, Mr. Thomas Thomson, D. Register of Scotland, under the title of "A Collection of Inventories, and other Records of the Royal Wardrobe, Jewel-House," etc. I copy the passage in which mention is made of the mazers, and also of a habiliment, called "King Robert Bruce's serk," i.e. *shirt*, meaning, perhaps, his shirt of mail; although no other arms are mentioned in the inventory. It might have been a relic of more sanctified description, a penance shirt perhaps.

Extract from "Inventare of ane Parte of the Gold and Silver conyeit and unconyeit, Jowellis, and uther Stuff perteining to Umquhile oure Soverane Lords Fader, that he had in Depois the Tyme of his Deceis, and that come to the Handis of oure Soverane Lord that now is, M.CCCC. LXXXVIII."

"Memorandum fundin in a bandit kist like a gardeviant,¹ in the fyrst the grete chenye ² of gold, contenand sevin score sex linkis.

Item, thre platis of silver.

Item, tuelf salfatis.³

Item, fyftene discheis ⁴ ouregilt.

Item, a grete gilt plate.

Item, twa grete bassingis ⁵ ouregilt.

Item, FOUR MASARIS, CALLED KING ROBERT THE BRODIS, with a cover.

Item, a grete cok maid of silver.

Item, the hede of silver of ane of the coveris of masar.

Item, a fare dialle.⁶

Item, twa kasis of knyffis.⁷

¹ Gard-vin, or wine-cooler.

² Chain.

³ Salt-cellars, anciently the object of much curious workmanship.

⁴ Dishes. ⁵ Basins. ⁶ Dial.

⁷ Cases of knives.

Item, a pare of auld kniffis.

Item, takin be the smyth that opinnit the loddies, in gold fourty demyis.

Item, in Inglys grotis¹ . . . xxiiii. li. and the said silver given again to the takaris of hym.

Item, ressavit in the clossat of Davidis tour, ane haly water-fat of silver, twa boxis, a cageat tume, a glas with rois-water, a dosoune of torchis, King ROBERT BRUCIS SERK."

The real use of the antiquarian's studies is to bring the minute information which he collects to bear upon points of history. For example, in the inventory I have just quoted, there is given the contents of the *black kist* or chest, belonging to James III., which was his strong box and contained a quantity of treasure, in money and jewels surpassing what might have been at the period expected of "poor Scotland's gear."

Arouse old friends, and gather new.—P. 371.

As soon as it was known in Kyle, says ancient tradition, that Robert Bruce had landed in Carrick, with the intention of recovering the crown of Scotland, the Laird of Craigie, and forty-eight men in his immediate neighbourhood, declared in favour of their legitimate prince. Bruce granted them a tract of land, still retained by the freemen of Newton to this day. The original charter was lost when the pestilence was raging at Ayr; but it was renewed by one of the Jameses, and is dated at Faulkland. The freemen of Newton were formerly officers by rotation. The Provost of Ayr at one time was a freeman of Newton, and it happened to be his turn, while provost in Ayr, to be officer in Newton, both of which offices he discharged at the same time.

The forest of Selkirk, or Ettrick, at this period, occupied all the district which retains that denomination, and embraced the neighbouring dales of Tweeddale, and at least the Upper Ward of Clydesdale. All that tract was probably as waste as it is mountainous, and covered with the remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest, which is supposed to have stretched from Cheviot Hills as far as Hamilton, and to have comprehended even a part of Ayrshire. At the fatal battle of Falkirk, Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, brother to the Steward of Scotland, commanded the archers of Selkirk Forest, who fell around the dead body of their leader.

*When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd,
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale.*—P. 371.

The first important advantage gained by Bruce, after landing at Turnberry, was over Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, the same by whom he had been defeated near Methven. They met, as has been said, by appointment, at Loudonhill, in the west of Scotland. Pembroke sustained a defeat; and from that time Bruce was at the head of a considerable flying army. Yet he was subsequently obliged to retreat into Aberdeenshire, and was there assailed by Comyn, Earl of Buchan, desirous to avenge the death of his relative, the Red Comyn, and supported by a body of English troops under Philip de Moubray. Bruce was ill at the time of a scrofulous disorder, but took horse to meet his enemies, although obliged to be supported on either side. He was victorious, and it is said that the agitation of his spirits restored his health.

¹ English groats.

When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale.—P. 371.

The "good Lord James of Douglas," during these commotions, often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains. As a reward to his patriotism, it is said to have been prophesied, that how often soever Douglas Castle should be destroyed, it should always again rise more magnificent from its ruins. Upon one of these occasions he used fearful cruelty, causing all the store of provisions, which the English had laid up in his castle, to be heaped together, bursting the wine and beer casks among the wheat and flour, slaughtering the cattle upon the same spot, and upon the top of the whole cutting the throats of the English prisoners. This pleasantry of the "good Lord James" is commemorated under the name of the *Douglas Larder*. A more pleasing tale of chivalry is recorded by Godscroft.—"By this means, and such other exploits, he so affrighted the enemy, that it was counted a matter of great jeopardy to keep this castle, which began to be called the *adventurous* (or hazardous) *Castle of Douglas*; whereupon Sir John Walton being in suit of an English lady, she wrote to him, that when he had kept the adventurous Castle of Douglas seven years, then he might think himself worthy to be a suitor to her. Upon this occasion Walton took upon him the keeping of it, and succeeded to Thruswall, but he ran the same fortune with the rest that were before him. For Sir James, having first dressed an ambuscado near unto the place, he made fourteen of his men take so many sacks, and fill them with grass, as though it had been corn, which they carried in the way to Lanark, the chief market town in that county: so hoping to draw forth the captain by that bait, and either to take him or the castle, or both. Neither was this expectation frustrated, for the captain did bite, and came forth to have taken this victual (as he supposed). But ere he could reach these carriers, Sir James, with his company, had gotten between the castle and him; and these disguised carriers, seeing the captain following after them, did quickly cast off their sacks, mounted themselves on horseback, and met the captain with a sharp encounter, being so much the more amazed, as it was unlooked for: wherefore, when he saw these carriers metamorphosed into warriors, and ready to assault him, fearing that which was, that there was some train laid for them, he turned about to have retired to his castle, but there he also met with his enemies; between which two companies he and his whole followers were slain, so that none escaped: the captain afterwards being searched they found (as it is reported) his mistress's letter about him."—HUME's *History of the House of Douglas*, fol. pp. 29, 30.

And fiery Edward routed stout St. John.—P. 371.

"John de St. John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots. By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timeously received. The courage of Edward Bruce, approaching to temerity, frequently enabled him to achieve what men of more judicious valour would never have attempted. He ordered the infantry, and the meaner sort of his army, to intrench themselves in strong narrow ground. He himself, with fifty horsemen well harnessed, issued forth under cover of a thick mist, surprised the English on their march, attacked and dispersed them."—DALRYMPLE's *Annals of Scotland*, quarto, Edinburgh, 1779, p. 25.

When Randolph's war-cry swell'd the southern gale.—P. 371.

Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself. He espoused his uncle's party when Bruce first assumed the crown, and was made prisoner at the fatal battle of Methven, in which his relative's hopes appeared to be ruined. Randolph accordingly not only submitted to the English, but took an active part against Bruce; appeared in arms against him; and, in the skirmish where he was so closely pursued by the bloodhound, it is said his nephew took his standard with his own hand. But Randolph was afterwards made prisoner by Douglas in Tweeddale, and brought before King Robert. Some harsh language was exchanged between the uncle and nephew, and the latter was committed for a time to close custody. Afterwards, however, they were reconciled, and Randolph was created Earl of Moray about 1312. After this period he eminently distinguished himself, first by the surprise of Edinburgh Castle, and afterwards by many similar enterprises, conducted with equal courage and ability.

—*Stirling's towers,
Beleaguer'd by King Robert's powers ;
And they took term of truce.—P. 372.*

When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling Castle continued to hold out. The care of the blockade was committed by the king to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with Sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not succoured by the King of England before St. John the Baptist's day. The King severely blamed his brother for the impolicy of a treaty, which gave time to the King of England to advance to the relief of the castle with all his assembled forces, and obliged himself either to meet them in battle with an inferior force, or to retreat with dishonour. "Let all England come," answered the reckless Edward; "we will fight them were they more." The consequences was, of course, that each kingdom mustered its strength for the expected battle; and as the space agreed upon reached from Lent to Midsummer, full time was allowed for that purpose.

*To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege.—P. 373.*

There is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera* the summons issued upon this occasion to the sheriff of York; and he mentions eighteen other persons to whom similar ordinances were issued. It seems to respect the infantry alone, for it is entitled, *De peditibus ad recussum Castri de Stryvelin a Scotis obsessi, properare faciendis*. This circumstance is also clear from the reasoning of the writ, which states: "We have understood that our Scottish enemies and rebels are endeavouring to collect as strong a force as possible of infantry, in strong and marshy grounds, where the approach of cavalry would be difficult, between us and the castle of Stirling."—It then sets forth Mowbray's agreement to surrender the castle, if not relieved before St. John the Baptist's day, and the king's determination, with divine grace, to raise the siege. "Therefore," the summons further bears, "to remove our said enemies and rebels from such places as above mentioned, it is necessary for us to have a strong force of infantry fit for arms." And accordingly the

sheriff of York is commanded to equip and send forth a body of four thousand infantry, to be assembled at Werk, upon the tenth day of June first, under pain of the royal displeasure, etc.

*And Cambria, but of late subdued,
Sent forth her mountain-multitude.*—P. 373.

Edward the First, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welsh, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them. But this policy was not without its risks. Previous to the battle of Falkirk, the Welsh quarrelled with the English men-at-arms, and after bloodshed on both parts, separated themselves from his army, and the feud between them, at so dangerous and critical a juncture, was reconciled with difficulty. Edward II followed his father's example in this particular, and with no better success. They could not be brought to exert themselves in the cause of their conquerors. But they had an indifferent reward for their forbearance. Without arms, and clad only in scanty dresses of linen cloth, they appeared naked in the eyes even of the Scottish peasantry; and after the rout of Bannockburn, were massacred by them in great numbers, as they retired in confusion towards their own country. They were under command of Sir Maurice de Berkeley.

*And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.*—P. 373.

There is in the *Fædera* an invitation to Eth O'Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race. These auxiliaries were to be commanded by Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster.

Their chief, Fitz-Louis.—P. 375.

Fitz-Louis, or Mac-Louis, otherwise called Fullarton, is a family of ancient descent in the Isle of Arran. They are said to be of French origin, as the name intimates. They attached themselves to Bruce upon his first landing; and Fergus Mac-Louis, or Fullarton, received from the grateful monarch a charter, dated 26th November, in the second year of his reign (1307), for the lands of Kilmichel, and others, which still remain in this very ancient and respectable family.

*In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.*—P. 376.

The arrangements adopted by King Robert for the decisive battle of Bannockburn, are given very distinctly by Barbour, and form an edifying lesson to tacticians. Yet, till commented upon by Lord Hailes, this important passage of history has been generally and strangely misunderstood by historians. I will here endeavour to detail it fully.

Two days before the battle, Bruce selected the field of action, and took post there with his army, consisting of about 30,000 disciplined men, and about half the number of disorderly attendants upon the camp. The ground was called the New Park of Stirling; it was partly open, and partly broken by copses of wood and marshy ground. He

divided his regular forces into four divisions. Three of these occupied a front line, separated from each other, yet sufficiently near for the purpose of communication. The fourth division formed a reserve. The line extended in a north-easterly direction from the brook of Bannock, which was so rugged and broken as to cover the right flank effectually, to the village of Saint Ninians, probably in the line of the present road from Stirling to Kilsyth. Edward Bruce commanded the right wing, which was strengthened by a strong body of cavalry under Keith, the Mareschal of Scotland, to whom was committed the important charge of attacking the English archers; Douglas, and the young Steward of Scotland, led the central wing; and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, the left wing. The King himself commanded the fourth division, which lay in reserve behind the others. The royal standard was pitched, according to tradition, in a stone, having a round hole for its reception, and thence called the Bore-stone. It is still shown on the top of a small eminence, called Brock's-brae, to the south-west of Saint Ninians. His main body thus disposed, King Robert sent the followers of the camp, fifteen thousand and upwards in number, to the eminence in rear of his army, called from that circumstance the *Gillies'* (i.e. the servants') *Hill*.

The military advantages of this position were obvious. The Scottish left flank, protected by the brook of Bannock, could not be turned; or, if that attempt were made, a movement by the reserve might have covered it. Again, the English could not pass the Scottish army, and move towards Stirling, without exposing their flank to be attacked while in march.

It only remains to notice the nature of the ground in front of Bruce's line of battle. Being part of a park, or chase, it was considerably interrupted with trees; and an extensive marsh, still visible, in some places rendered it inaccessible, and in all of difficult approach. More to the northward, where the natural impediments were fewer, Bruce fortified his position against cavalry, by digging a number of pits so close together, says Barbour, as to resemble the cells in a honey-comb. They were a foot in breadth, and between two and three feet deep, many rows of them being placed one behind the other. They were slightly covered with brushwood and green sods, so as not to be obvious to an impetuous enemy.

All the Scottish army were on foot, excepting a select body of cavalry stationed with Edward Bruce on the right wing, under the immediate command of Sir Robert Keith, the Marshal of Scotland, who were destined for the important service of charging and dispersing the English archers.

Thus judiciously posted, in a situation fortified both by art and nature, Bruce awaited the attack of the English.

Beyond, the Southern host appears.—P. 376.

Upon the 23rd June, 1314, the alarm reached the Scottish army of the approach of the enemy. Douglas and the Marshal were sent to reconnoitre with a body of cavalry:

" And soon the great host have they seen,
Where shields shining were so sheen,
And basinets burnished bright,
That gave against the sun great light.
They saw so fele ¹ brawdyne ² baners,
Standards and pennons and spears

¹ Many.

² Displayed.

And so fele knights upon steeds,
 All flaming in their weeds,
 And so fele bataills, and so broad,
 And too so great room as they rode,
 That the maist host, and the stoutest
 Of Christendom, and the greatest,
 Should be abaysit for to see
 Their foes into such quantity."

The Bruce, vol. ii. p. iii.

The two Scottish commanders were cautious in the account which they brought back to their camp. To the king in private they told the formidable state of the enemy; but in public reported that the English were indeed a numerous host, but ill commanded, and worse disciplined.

*With these the valiant of the Isles
 Beneath their chieftains rank'd their files.*—P. 376.

The men of Argyle, the islanders, and the Highlanders in general, were ranked in the rear. They must have been numerous, for Bruce had reconciled himself with almost all their chieftains, excepting the obnoxious MacDougals of Lorn.

The Monarch rode along the van.—P. 377.

The English vanguard, commanded by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, came in sight of the Scottish army upon the evening of the 23rd of June. Bruce was then riding upon a little palfrey, in front of his foremost line, putting his host in order. It was then that the personal encounter took place betwixt him and Sir Henry de Bohun, a gallant English knight, the issue of which had a great effect upon the spirits of both armies.

The Scottish leaders remonstrated with the King upon his temerity. He only answered, "I have broken my good battle-axe."—The English vanguard retreated after witnessing this single combat. Probably their generals did not think it advisable to hazard an attack while its unfavourable issue remained upon their minds.

*What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
 And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
 Our leftward flank?*—P. 380.

While the van of the English army advanced, a detached body attempted to relieve Stirling. Lord Hailes gives the following account of this manœuvre and the result, which is accompanied by circumstances highly characteristic of the chivalrous manners of the age, and displays that generosity which reconciles us even to their ferocity upon other occasions.

Bruce had enjoined Randolph, who commanded the left wing of his army, to be vigilant in preventing any advanced parties of the English from throwing succours into the castle of Stirling.

"Eight hundred horsemen, commanded by Sir Robert Clifford, were detached from the English army; they made a circuit by the low grounds to the east, and approached the castle. The King perceived their motions, and, coming up to Randolph, angrily exclaimed, 'Thoughtless man! you have suffered the enemy to pass.' Randolph hastened to repair his fault, or perish. As he advanced, the English cavalry wheeled to attack him. Randolph drew up his troops in a circular

form, with their spears resting on the ground, and protended on every side. At the first onset, Sir William Daynecourt, an English commander of distinguished note, was slain. The enemy, far superior in numbers to Randolph, environed him, and pressed hard on his little band. Douglas saw his jeopardy, and requested the King's permission to go and succour him. 'You shall not move from your ground,' cried the King; 'let Randolph extricate himself as he best may. I will not alter my order of battle and lose the advantage of my position.'—'In truth,' replied Douglas, 'I cannot stand by and see Randolph perish; and, therefore, with your leave, I must aid him.' The King unwillingly consented, and Douglas flew to the assistance of his friend. While approaching, he perceived that the English were falling into disorder, and that the perseverance of Randolph had prevailed over their impetuous courage. 'Halt,' cried Douglas, 'those brave men have repulsed the enemy; let us not diminish their glory by sharing it.'—DALRYMPLE'S *Annals of Scotland*, 4to, Edinburgh, 1779, pp. 44, 45.

Two large stones erected at the north end of the village of Newhouse, about a quarter of a mile from the south part of Stirling, ascertain the place of this memorable skirmish. The circumstance tends, were confirmation necessary, to support the opinion of Lord Hailes, that the Scottish line had Stirling on its left flank. It will be remembered, that Randolph commanded infantry, Daynecourt cavalry. Supposing, therefore, according to the vulgar hypothesis, that the Scottish line was drawn up, facing to the south, in the line of the brook of Bannock, and consequently that Randolph was stationed with his left flank resting upon Milntown bog, it is morally impossible that his infantry, moving from that position, with whatever celerity, could cut off from Stirling a body of cavalry who had already passed St. Ninians,¹ or, in other words, were already between them and the town. Whereas, supposing Randolph's left to have approached St. Ninians, the short movement to Newhouse could easily be executed, so as to intercept the English in the manner described.

*Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle sound were toss'd.*—P. 382.

There is an old tradition, that the well-known Scottish tune of "Hey, tutti taitti," was Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn. The late Mr. Ritson, no granter of propositions, doubts whether the Scots had any martial music, quotes Froissart's account of each soldier in the host bearing a little horn, on which, at the onset, they would make such a horrible noise, as if all the devils of hell had been among them. He observes, that these horns are the only music mentioned by Barbour, and concludes, that it must remain a moot point whether Bruce's army were cheered by the sound even of a solitary bagpipe.—*Historical Essay prefixed to Ritson's Scottish Songs*.—It may be observed in passing, that the Scottish of this period certainly observed some musical cadence, even in winding their horns, since Bruce was at once recognised by his followers from his mode of blowing. See Note on canto iv. p. 573. But the tradition, true or false, has been the means of securing to Scotland one of the finest lyrics in the language, the celebrated war-song of Burns,—“Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled.”

¹ Barbour says expressly, they avoided the New Park (where Bruce's army lay), and held “well neath the Kirk,” which can only mean St. Ninians.

*Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew.*—P. 382.

Upon the 24th of June, the English army advanced to the attack. The narrowness of the Scottish front, and the nature of the ground, did not permit them to have the full advantage of their numbers, nor is it very easy to find out what was their proposed order of battle. The vanguard, however, appeared a distinct body, consisting of archers and spearmen on foot, and commanded, as already said, by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford. Barbour, in one place, mentions that they formed nine BATTLES or divisions; but from the following passage, it appears that there was no room or space for them to extend themselves, so that, except the vanguard, the whole army appeared to form one solid and compact body:—

“ The English men, on either party,
That as angels shone brightly,
Were not array’d on such manner:
For all their battles samyn¹ were
In a schiltrum.² But whether it was
Through the great straitness of the place
That they were in, to bide fighting;
Or that it was for abaysing;³
I wete not. But in a schiltrum
It seemed they were all and some;
Out ta’en the vaward anerly,⁴
That right with a great company,
Be them selwyn, arrayed were.
Who had been by, might have seen there
That folk ourtake a mekill feild
On breadth, where many a shining shield,
And many a burnished bright armour,
And many a man of great valour,
Might in that great schiltrum be seen,
And many a bright banner and sheen.”

BARBOUR’S *Bruce*, vol. ii. p. 137.

*See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!*—P. 383.

“ Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front bare-footed, and bearing a crucifix in his hands, and exhorting the Scots, in few and forcible words, to combat for their rights and their liberty. The Scots kneeled down. ‘They yield,’ cried Edward; ‘see, they implore mercy.’—‘They do,’ answered Ingelram de Umfraville, ‘but not ours. On that field they will be victorious, or die.’”—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 47.

*We’ll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!*—P. 383.

The English archers commenced the attack with their usual bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided. A small but select body of cavalry were detached from the right, under command of Sir Robert

¹ Together.

² *Schiltrum*—A large body of men drawn up very closely together.

³ Frightening.

⁴ Alone.

Keith. They rounded, as I conceive, the marsh called Milntown bog, and, keeping the firm ground, charged the left flank and rear of the English archers. As the bowmen had no spears nor long weapons fit to defend themselves against horse, they were instantly thrown into disorder, and spread through the whole English army a confusion from which they never fairly recovered.

*Each braggart churl could boast before,
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore !—P. 384.*

Roger Ascham quotes a similar Scottish proverb, "whereby they give the whole praise of shooting honestly to Englishmen, saying thus, 'that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scottes.' Indeed Toxophilus says before, and truly of the Scottish nation, 'The Scottes surely be good men of warre in theyre owne feates as can be; but as for shootinge, they can neither use it to any profite, nor yet challenge it for any praise.'"—*Works of Ascham, edited by Bennet, 4to. p. 110.*

It is said, I trust incorrectly, by an ancient English historian, that the "good Lord James of Douglas" dreaded the superiority of the English archers so much, that when he made any of them prisoner, he gave him the option of losing the forefinger of his right hand, or his right eye, either species of mutilation rendering him incapable to use the bow. I have mislaid the reference to this singular passage.

*Down ! down ! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go.—P. 384.*

It is generally alleged by historians, that the English men-at-arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them. Barbour does not mention the circumstance. According to his account, Randolph, seeing the slaughter made by the cavalry on the right wing among the archers, advanced courageously against the main body of the English, and entered into close combat with them. Douglas and Stuart, who commanded the Scottish centre, led their division also to the charge, and the battle becoming general along the whole line, was obstinately maintained on both sides for a long space of time; the Scottish archers doing great execution among the English men-at-arms, after the bowmen of England were dispersed.

And steeds that shriek in agony !—P. 385.

I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note; and, indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage, may be permitted to doubt, that, in moments of sudden and intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry. Lord Erskine, in a speech made in the House of Lords, upon a bill for enforcing humanity towards animals, noticed this remarkable fact, in language which I will not mutilate by attempting to repeat it. It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream, which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard.

*Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock ;
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge.—P. 386.*

When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time, Bruce made a decisive movement, by bringing up the Scottish

reserve. It is traditionally said, that at this crisis, he addressed the Lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, "My trust is constant in thee." Barbour intimates, that the reserve "assembled on one field," that is, on the same line with the Scottish forces already engaged; which leads Lord Hailes to conjecture that the Scottish ranks must have been much thinned by slaughter, since, in that circumscribed ground, there was room for the reserve to fall into the line. But the advance of the Scottish cavalry must have contributed a good deal to form the vacancy occupied by the reserve.

*To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear.—P. 388.*

The followers of the Scottish camp observed, from the Gillies' Hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and, prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary manner, such arms as they found nearest, fastened sheets to tent-poles and lances, and showed themselves like a new army advancing to battle.

The unexpected apparition, of what seemed a new army, completed the confusion which already prevailed among the English, who fled in every direction, and were pursued with immense slaughter. The brook of Bannock, according to Barbour, was so choked with the bodies of men and horses, that it might have been passed dry-shod. The followers of the Scottish camp fell upon the disheartened fugitives, and added to the confusion and slaughter. Many were driven into the Forth, and perished there, which, by the way, could hardly have happened, had the armies been drawn up east and west; since, in that case, to get at the river, the English fugitives must have fled through the victorious army. About a short mile from the field of battle is a place called the Bloody Folds. Here the Earl of Gloucester is said to have made a stand, and died gallantly at the head of his own military tenants and vassals. He was much regretted by both sides; and it is said the Scottish would gladly have saved his life, but, neglecting to wear his surcoat, with armorial bearings over his armour, he fell unknown, after his horse had been stabbed with spears.

Sir Marmaduke Twenge, an English knight, contrived to conceal himself during the fury of the pursuit, and when it was somewhat slackened, approached King Robert. "Whose prisoner are you, Sir Marmaduke?" said Bruce, to whom he was personally known. "Yours, sir," answered the knight. "I receive you," answered the king, and, treating him with the utmost courtesy, loaded him with gifts, and dismissed him without ransom. The other prisoners were all well treated. There might be policy in this, as Bruce would naturally wish to acquire the good opinion of the English barons, who were at this time at great variance with their king. But it also well accords with his high chivalrous character.

O give their hapless prince his due!—P. 388.

Edward II., according to the best authorities, showed, in the fatal field of Bannockburn, personal gallantry not unworthy of his great sire and greater son. He remained on the field till forced away by the Earl of Pembroke, when all was lost. He then rode to the Castle of Stirling, and demanded admittance; but the governor, remonstrating upon the imprudence of shutting himself up in that fortress, which must so soon surrender, he assembled around his person five hundred men-at-arms, and, avoiding the field of battle and the victorious army, fled towards

Linlithgow, pursued by Douglas with about sixty horse. They were augmented by Sir Lawrence Abernethy with twenty more, whom Douglas met in the Torwood upon their way to join the English army, and whom he easily persuaded to desert the defeated monarch, and to assist in the pursuit. They hung upon Edward's flight as far as Dunbar, too few in number to assail him with effect, but enough to harass his retreat so constantly, that whoever fell an instant behind, was instantly slain or made prisoner. Edward's ignominious flight terminated at Dunbar, where the Earl of March, who still professed allegiance to him, "received him full gently." From thence, the monarch of so great an empire, and the late commander of so gallant and numerous an army, escaped to Bamborough in a fishing vessel.

*Nor for De Argentine alone,
Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.*—P. 390.

The remarkable circumstances attending the death of De Argentine have been already noticed. Besides this renowned warrior, there fell many representatives of the noblest houses in England, which never sustained a more bloody and disastrous defeat. Barbour says that two hundred pairs of gilded spurs were taken from the field of battle; and that some were left the author can bear witness, who has in his possession a curious antique spur, dug up in the morass not long since.

It wes forsuth a gret ferly,
To se samyn ¹ sa fele dede lie.
Twa hundre payr of spuris reid,²
War tane of knichtis that war deid."

I am now to take my leave of Barbour, not without a sincere wish that the public may encourage the undertaking of my friend Dr. Jamieson, who has issued proposals for publishing an accurate edition of his poem, and of blind Harry's Wallace. The only good edition of *The Bruce* was published by Mr. Pinkerton, in 3 vols., in 1790; and, the learned editor having had no personal access to consult the manuscript, it is not without errors; and it has besides become scarce. Of Wallace there is no tolerable edition; yet these two poems do no small honour to the early state of Scottish poetry, and *The Bruce* is justly regarded as containing authentic historical facts.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

*The peasant, at his labour blithe,
Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe.*—P. 442.

The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short scythe, which he holds in his right hand. They carry on this double process with great spirit and dexterity.

¹ Together.

² Red, or gilded.

Pale Brussels ! then what thoughts were thine.—P. 445.

It was affirmed by the prisoners of war, that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

" On ! On ! " was still his stern exclaim.—P. 445.

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles. An eye-witness has given the following account of his demeanour towards the end of the action:—

" It was near seven o'clock; Bonaparte, who till then had remained upon the ridge of the hill whence he could best behold what passed, contemplated with a stern countenance, the scene of this horrible slaughter. The more that obstacles seemed to multiply, the more his obstinacy seemed to increase. He became indignant at these unforeseen difficulties; and, far from fearing to push to extremities an army whose confidence in him was boundless, he ceased not to pour down fresh troops, and to give orders to march forward to charge with the bayonet—to carry by storm. He was repeatedly informed, from different points, that the day went against him, and that the troops seemed to be disordered; to which he only replied,—*' En-avant ! En-avant ! '*

" One general sent to inform the Emperor that he was in a position which he could not maintain, because it was commanded by a battery, and requested to know, at the same time, in what way he should protect his division from the murderous fire of the English artillery. '*Let him storm the battery,*' replied Bonaparte, and turned his back on the aide-de-camp who brought the message."—*Relation de la Bataille de Mont-St-Jean. Par un Témoin Oculaire.* Paris, 1815, 8vo. p. 51.

The fate their leader shunn'd to share.—P. 446.

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards, at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down indeed to a hollow part of the high road, leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards, and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned, which the rising banks on each side rendered secure from all such balls as did not come in a straight line. He witnessed the earlier part of the battle from places yet more remote, particularly from an observatory which had been placed there by the King of the Netherlands some weeks before, for the purpose of surveying the country. It is not meant to infer from these particulars that Napoleon showed, on that memorable occasion, the least deficiency in personal courage; on the contrary, he evinced the greatest composure and presence of mind during the whole action. But it is no less true that report has erred in ascribing to him any desperate efforts of valour for recovery of the battle; and it is remarkable, that during the whole

carnage, none of his suite were either killed or wounded, whereas scarcely one of the Duke of Wellington's personal attendants escaped unhurt.

England shall tell the fight !—P. 446.

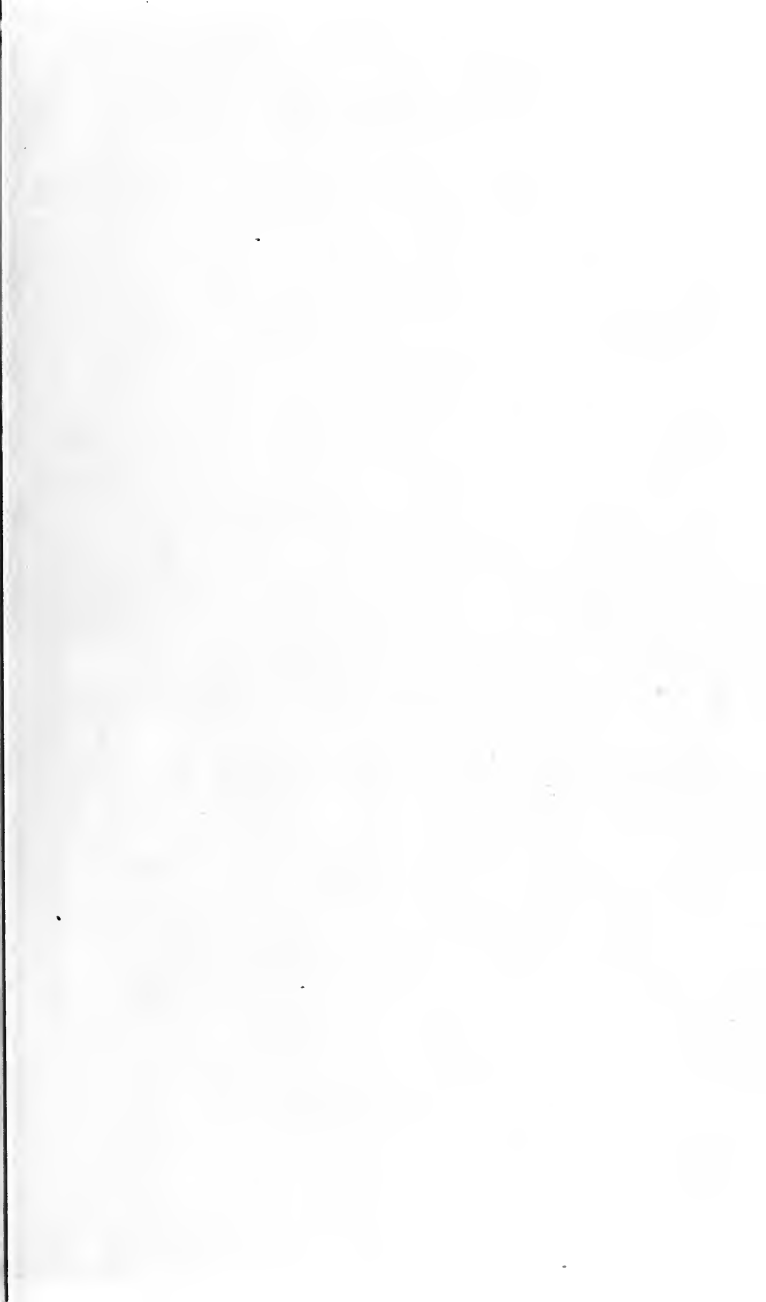
In riding up to a regiment which was hard pressed, the Duke called to the men, "Soldiers, we must never be beat,—what will they say in England?" It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

As plies the smith his clanging trade.—P. 447.

A private soldier of the 95th regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to "*a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles.*"

The British shock of levell'd steel.—P. 447.

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The Imperial Guards, in particular, hardly stood till the British were within thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The Guards never yield—they die." The same author has covered the plateau, or eminence, of St. Jean, which formed the British position, with redoubts and retrenchments which never had an existence. As the narrative, which is in many respects curious, was written by an eye-witness, he was probably deceived by the appearance of a road and ditch which run along part of the hill. It may be also mentioned, in criticising this work, that the writer mentions the Chateau of Hougomont to have been carried by the French, although it was resolutely and successfully defended during the whole action. The enemy, indeed, possessed themselves of the wood by which it is surrounded, and at length set fire to the house itself; but the British (a detachment of the Guards, under the command of Colonel Macdonnell, and afterwards of Colonel Home) made good the garden, and thus preserved, by their desperate resistance, the post which covered the return of the Duke of Wellington's right flank.





EVERYMAN,
I WILL GO WITH
THEE.
TO BE THY GUIDE
IN THY MOST NEED
TO GO BY THY SIDE



25

1905

